

Conservatives top poll as leaders, but confidence in policies declines

MORE people expect the Conservatives to lose their overall majority in the election than believe John Major and his party will win outright, according to the latest Mori opinion poll for *The Times*. As the election campaign proper opens, Labour is seen as having marginally the best policies, but the Tories the best team of leaders.

A Mori survey, conducted since the election was called, found 31 per cent who believed that the Tories would come through on April 10 with an overall majority, compared to just 18 per cent who believed that Labour would win outright. But 20 per cent believed that the Conservatives would be merely the largest party, requiring Liberal Democrat support to be sure of governing, and 18 per cent believed that Labour would be the largest party.

More people now expect the general election to end in a hung parliament, according to the latest opinion poll by Mori, Robin Oakley writes

dependent on minority party support.

A total of 49 per cent of those questioned believed that the election was unlikely to end with any party holding an overall majority while only 43 per cent believed it was likely to end with a single party holding a majority.

More bad news for the government is that Labour is seen, by a narrow margin, as having the best policies overall for the country. A third of those questioned said Labour had the best policies, to 32 per cent for the Conservatives and 13 per cent for the Liberal Democrats.

But the Conservatives have a significant margin on leadership: 40 per cent of those questioned said that the Conservatives have the best team of leaders to 30 per cent for Labour and 8 per cent for the Liberal Democrats.

When respondents were asked which would make the most capable prime minister, 40 per cent named John Major, 27 per cent Neil Kinnock and 21 per cent Paddy Ashdown. Twice as many Labour supporters name Mr Major as Tories name Mr Kinnock.

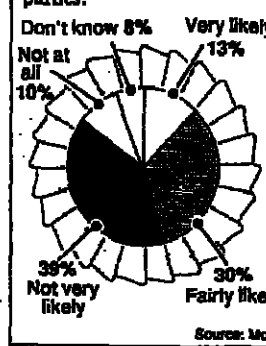
Election see the Conservatives as the party with the

clearest policies. When respondents were asked which party was most clearly united about what its policies should be, 35 per cent named the Conservatives, 28 per cent the Labour party and 13 per cent the Liberal Democrats.

The issues of greatest concern to the electorate are health (46 per cent), education (34 per cent) and unemployment (27 per cent), all three issues on which Labour tends to benefit.

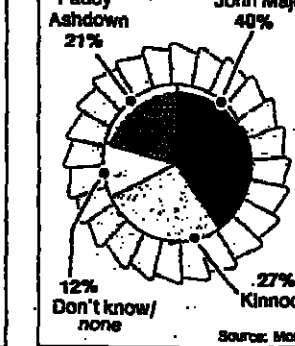
When people were asked which party had the best policies for dealing with the issues, Labour emerged with a 26-point lead over the Conservatives (50 per cent to 24 per cent) on health and with a 17 point lead (43 per cent to 26 per cent) on education. But the election is most likely to be determined on economic issues and the Conservatives lead Labour there by 35

EXPECTATION OF OUTCOME
Q How likely is it that one party will win a clear majority over all other parties?



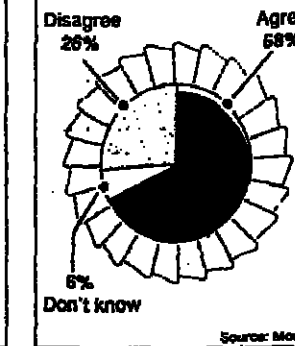
per cent to 29 per cent, a six-point margin despite the enduring recession.

LEADER IMAGE
Q Who do you think would make the most capable Prime Minister?



our supporters say they are very interested in the election campaign, 28 per cent of Conservatives are and so are 24 per cent of Liberal Democrats.

TIME FOR A CHANGE?
Q Do you agree or disagree with the statement: "It's time for a change?"



Sixty-three per cent of farmers would vote for the Tories compared with 83 per cent in 1987, according to the poll. The Liberal Democrats would get 26 per cent of the farming vote, double the party's 1987 share, and Labour would get 6 per cent, up from 1 per cent.

voted for the Tories in 1987 would defect to other parties, most to the Liberal Democrats, according to a poll by Mass Observation UK.

The poll suggests that seven marginal rural Tory seats could be lost to the Liberal Democrats or Welsh or Scottish nationalist parties. Disgruntled farmers could also destroy any chance the Tories might have of capturing eight narrowly held Liberal Democrat and Labour rural seats.

Major rejects call for debate on TV

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

A FLAT rejection by John Major of calls for him to face a televised debate with Neil Kinnock and Paddy Ashdown set the tone for a rowdy final pre-election confrontation between the party leaders in the Commons yesterday.

Mr Major and Mr Kinnock were embroiled in an abusive personal clash, with Mr Major accusing his opposite number of verbosity and Mr Kinnock calling Mr Major "frit" as their backbenches, relieved to be heading for the campaign trail at last, roared them on.

Mr Major, fully expecting the customary call for a television debate, is sticking to Margaret Thatcher's line that to appear on an equal footing with his two opponents could only serve to boost their status with the electorate.

Mr Kinnock, fully expecting to be refused, none the

less accused Mr Major of a pathetic excuse when the prime minister said that only politicians who expected to lose demanded a debate, and everyone who expected to win declined.

The two leaders had entered the arena to the prolonged cheering and waving of order papers from their MPs. Mr Kinnock told Mr Major that, since he became prime minister, 50,000 companies had gone out of business, 75,000 families had lost their homes and 800,000 people had lost their jobs.

"Why won't you debate that record. Is it because you are ashamed of it or afraid of it?" Ken Livingstone, Labour MP for Brent East, had called for a debate, saying the election would be won by the party that could best convince the electorate it could end the recession, reverse "the catastrophic decline in invest-

ment" and modernise industry. Those issues "require the party leaders to meet and debate in television. And, given that the leaders of the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties are prepared to take part in that debate, will you simply tell us whether you are prepared to do so as well, or have you lost the confidence to defend your own economic record?"

Mr Major said: "It will be this party that leads the country out of recession and sits on these benches after the general election. Every party politician that expects to lose tries that trick of debate and every politician who expects to win says no."

Mr Major said that he and Mr Ashdown would be lucky to get a word in edgewise because of the length of time it took Mr Kinnock to answer a question. Mr Kinnock then promised to give him plenty of time, and issued his challenge: "Join with me and Mr Ashdown and say to the broadcasting organisations: 'We have nothing to fear from the British people. Let's have a debate, let's fix the date, let's get on with it.'"

Mr Major said: "We have been better than a debate. We have a general election at which the case can be taken to the people." Calling Shakespeare in aid, Mr Major told Mr



Certain call: John Major at the dispatch box during his final prime minister's questions in this parliament

Kinnock: "He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument." It was appropriately from *Love's Labour's Lost*, Mr Major declared to a delicious shout, "and Labour will lose."

Mr Kinnock chose a quotation from Mrs Thatcher, a Lincolnshire insult she once directed at Michael Foot. Mr Major was "frit", he declared to a thunderous Labour roar. Mr Major spent much of the

remainder of the 15-minute session attacking Labour's attitude to the new 20p tax band. "It's now official: Labour want to put up taxes not only for those on high incomes, but those on low incomes as well."

Mr Ashdown said the reaction of the markets to the Budget had been "the worst fall since the Soviet coup". He told Mr Major: "If you will not tell us in a television debate, will you tell us now:

how is that you do not know what every businessman knows, that to borrow to invest is the route to success, but to borrow to spend is the road to ruin?" Mr Major retorted: "There has been no party in history with as 'good' a fiscal record as this one has - none in history. And there is nothing in Mr Lamont's Budget that will not bring this Budget back to balance."

Harry Cohen, Labour MP for Leyton, asked: "If the

Budget is such a success, why haven't interest rates been cut immediately, instead of the Chancellor reserving his right to lower them during the general election when the polls are against him?" The prime minister replied: "Interest rates had been reduced by 4.5 percentage points in the past 16 months. As and when it is right to do so, we will reduce them further."

Peter Riddell, page 16

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Greens launch battle

By Michael McCarthy

THE Green party launched its campaign yesterday with a warning to Labour that it would not get a free ride in Tory marginals, as happened in some cases at the last election. Jean Lambert, one of the Greens' two main speakers, attacked Labour's and the Tories' environmental records when she addressed the party's conference at Bridlington, North Yorkshire.

The Greens are putting up 246 candidates, nearly double the number in 1987, many of them in Conservative marginals. There would be no repeat of the reluctance by some local Green parties in the last election to stand against Labour candidates, Ms Lambert said. "We don't care about Labour any more; we care about our own agenda."

Ms Lambert, a teacher and parliamentary candidate for Walthamstow, northeast London, attacked the government's aid for the car industry in the Budget as "unbelievably stupid".

Nationally, party figures may be aiming at the economy, the health service and education; locally, the voters were still digesting the resignation of their Conservative MP, following a caution by police for an alleged indecent act when the Liberal Democrat candidate announced that he was "gay and proud of it".

The political waters of what had been regarded as a

Clarke admits failing to win support for reforms

By John O'Leary, Education Correspondent

MINISTERS have failed to convince the public that their education reforms are necessary to raise standards in state schools, Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, has admitted.

In an interview with *The Times*, Mr Clarke said that the election campaign gave the Conservatives an opportunity to show that fundamental changes were needed to improve public services. "We must shake the British public out of its belief that every problem merely involves the expenditure of yet more public money, when many of them fail to appreciate the rate at which money is already being pumped into services like education."

Mr Clarke described education as a "major second-order issue" in the election. Arguments about the economy were bound to dominate the campaign. He claimed to have won the political argument with Labour about the need for reform to raise standards, although the Conservatives trail consistently in polls on education. "Too

many of the public want to see higher standards and agree with many of our changes. On the other hand, they combine that with not wanting the system to be shaken up, and believing that it will be okay if we put yet more money in."

"I do not think anyone could accuse me of being complacent," Mr Clarke said. "More than any other secretary of state, I have been quite forthright about saying standards are not good enough." The introduction of the national curriculum, testing, opening out, better training and appraisal for teachers, independent inspection, and more information for parents would all help bring standards up to the levels achieved in the best schools. "The real problem is the unacceptable disparity between the best and the worst," Mr Clarke said. "The government has been unsuccessful in the continuing dispute at Stratford school, east London. Mr Clarke said that the subject would be addressed when the present controversy died down."

The reforms took time to have an impact, and remained unfinished.

The Conservatives would continue to emphasise the benefits of a variety of schools. Selection at 11 would make only a modest return where parents favoured the grammar school system. Mr Clarke said that he had no ideological objections to selection, although he did not favour the 11-plus examination.

John Major's recent criticism of the comprehensive system had not indicated a wish to revive grammar schools. The prime minister's target had been the stifling of parental choice brought about by local authorities directing children to neighbourhood comprehensives. A new Conservative administration would consider changing the powers of school governors in the light of the continuing dispute at Stratford school, east London. Mr Clarke said that the subject would be addressed when the present controversy died down.

Put law on agenda, police say

THE Police Federation called last night for law and order to be put at the top of the political parties' election agendas and published its own "manifesto". The federation, which represents 125,000 officers in England and Wales, launching its *Agenda for Policing*, challenged the parties to say where they stood on law and order.

Barrie Clarke, for the federation, said that it had launched its agenda to call public attention to the crisis facing law and order. The agenda calls for a public election debate on how order can be maintained.

Richard Coyle, federation vice-chairman, said last night: "We are not making political points. After the defence of the realm, the first duty of government is the maintenance of the rule of law and there should be common ground between all the parties that law and order is not a political issue."

The *Agenda* says that many sections of society live in constant fear of crime and need reassurance.

Sex pushes politics off the agenda in Hexham

By Peter Davenport

DAY one of the election campaign proper found constituents in the market town of Hexham, Northumberland, with no shortage of talking points although they might not have been those intended by the political leaders.

Nationally, party figures may be aiming at the economy, the health service and education; locally, the voters were still digesting the resignation of their Conservative MP, following a caution by police for an alleged indecent act when the Liberal Democrat candidate announced that he was "gay and proud of it".

The political waters of what had been regarded as a

safe Conservative seat were further muddied yesterday by the news that Rodney Atkinson, aged 42, a businessman, and brother of the comedian Rowan Atkinson, would decide next week whether to contest the seat on a pro-European, anti-federalist platform which could split the Tory vote.

Alan Amos, who had a majority of 8,066 over the Liberals in 1987, announced on Monday evening that he was resigning after he was cautioned by police for an alleged indecent act with another man on Hampstead Heath. He denied he was homosexual and described the incident as

"childish and stupid". Yesterday Jonathan Wallace, the Liberal Democrat candidate regarded as the most serious threat to the Conservatives, announced that he was "gay and proud of it".

The university graduate, aged 28, who is now studying for a PhD in historical writing, said: "I don't want to hide behind lies and smutty innuendo. I would rather be up front and admit publicly that I am gay, than try and con the electors."

"I don't want to hide behind a fictitious lifestyle then to have people claim later that they have been conned," Mr Wallace has been the Liberal Democrat candidate

for the seat for three years. He has lived with his partner David for six years. He said: "I want a clean campaign in Hexham and that's why I have decided to be totally honest about my sexuality."

Joan Smith, a Liberal Democrat spokeswoman in the constituency, said, however, that the decision was influenced by Mr Wallace being approached by reporters from a Sunday newspaper and questioned about his sexuality. "They were following up the story on Mr Amos and asked Mr Wallace if he was gay. He replied: 'Yes - so what?' So far as we are concerned the issue is

now over and we carry on the campaign as normal and we reckon we have a very good chance of winning."

Chelsea fan made top aide

THE prime minister yesterday named a man he first met at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge football ground as his political secretary (Nicholas Wood writes). Jonathan Hill, aged 31, moves from the Downing Street policy unit to one of the most important and influential posts in Whitehall.

During the election campaign Mr Hill will be constantly at John Major's side, advising him on the campaign, polishing his speeches and keeping in regular touch with the Conservative high command in London.

He will have the task of ensuring that Mr Major's three-week tour of the country runs smoothly and of shielding his boss from the stresses and strains of the campaign.

Assuming the Tories win the election, Mr Hill will be one of the first to cross the Downing Street threshold in the new administration. His "peacetime" duties will include briefing Mr Major for Commons questions, speech-writing and liaising with central office and the parliamentary party.

Mr Hill's first encounter with the future prime minister came when he was a special adviser to Kenneth Clarke at trade and industry. Although they met at a football match, his passion for athletic endeavour would not run to naming the Oval as his desert island luxury.

A graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, he worked in the City and publishing before joining the Conservative research department in the mid-Eighties. He replaces Judith Chaplin, the Tory candidate at Newbury.

His appointment came as little surprise to Tory insiders. Nicholas True, a possible contender, has made his mark at Downing Street as Mr Major's chief speech-writer and could hardly be moved now. Other possibilities such as Tim Collins, the Tories' Westminster-based press officer, and David Cameron, who will brief the prime minister before his election press conferences, are also otherwise engaged.

Browne stands as independent

John Browne, MP for Winchester, is to stand against the Tories at the election as an independent, he confirmed yesterday. The Conservative MP was dissatisfied after the Commons ruled that he had not declared a private interest. He denies the charge. Conservative leaders are concerned that Mr Browne will split the Tory vote and stop Gerry Malone, their official candidate, winning the seat, thus letting in Tony Barron, the Liberal Democrat candidate.

SNP policy

The Scottish National Party yesterday issued its policy on voting reform in the event of an independent parliament. It would allow for 133 constituency members each elected by the alternative vote method. Professor Neil MacCormick, the nationalists' home affairs spokesman, said that the system would ensure a direct relationship between seats and votes.

Stirling effort

Stirling, home of Scottish monarchs between the 12th century and the union of the English and Scottish crowns in 1603, has placed its bid to become the home of the Scottish parliament, if and when a parliament is created.

Fun campaign

Norma Major told her local newspaper that she is looking forward to the general election. "It will be fun. We are going to win," she told the *Cambridge Evening News*.

Hattersley talks of need for partnership Labour hints at deal in hung parliament

By Robin Oakley, Political Editor

ROY Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, appeared to hint yesterday at his party's willingness to consider a deal with other parties in a hung parliament.

He told a news conference to launch the "It's time for Labour" campaign: "We are all dependent on each other. Prosperity can only be built on partnership. The future of this country depends on co-operation, not conflict."

But when Neil Kinnock was asked if that represented a hint of readiness to form a coalition if Labour emerged as the largest single party but without an overall majority he did not answer directly. He said: "We shall have a work-

ing majority" and added that he would welcome the support of other parties in pushing through Labour's programme.

Speaking largely about industrial development, Mr Kinnock, in conciliatory mood, said: "We have a country sick and tired of the government's contempt for consensus, partnership and consultation."

But when he was asked if he saw any prospect of the introduction of proportional representation before the end of the next parliament, Mr Kinnock said: "I think it would be highly unlikely."

The Liberal Democrats are

insisting that their minimum price for any coalition deal is legislation on the introduction of proportional representation for Westminster.

Labour has already conceded PR for its proposed Scottish assembly. Mr Kinnock said yesterday that the party's inquiry into electoral systems, chaired by Professor Raymond Plant, would be given added status by reporting to Labour in government. The British public, he said, was interested in getting the information and analysing all the possibilities on electoral systems.

At the Labour launch, attended by people from the show business, legal and medical worlds, Mr Kinnock predicted that Labour would have an overall majority of 20. Asked about the mountain that Labour had to climb in achieving a record swing of 8 per cent since the last election to win power, Mr Kinnock said: "I've got a very good climbing team. We've travelled a large part of the distance up the mountain already on the basis of the polls going into the election."



Reaching for power: Neil Kinnock and members of his shadow cabinet launching Labour's election campaign in London yesterday

Lib Dems commit themselves to 1p tax rise

By Sheila Gunn, Political Correspondent

THE Liberal Democrats pledged last night to put 1p on the basic rate of income tax, taking it to 26p, to fund improvements in schools and the education system.

Alan Beith, the party's Treasury spokesman, made the commitment during the party's political broadcast. Previously he and Paddy Ashdown had always said the money to do the job, but it must be done.

Mr Beith also committed the party to reversing the chancellor's new tax band of 20p in the pound for the first £2,000 of taxable income. Britain could not afford a tax out now, he said. Money invested in public services, school buildings, hospitals, railways and houses would create jobs and so pay wages

a difference to our children's chances and our nation's chances to pay our way," Mr Beith said yesterday.

"We've said all along that it's the one investment for which we'd be prepared to put a penny on income tax. What the Budget has revealed is that the cupboard is bare. The chancellor has not left us the money to do the job, but it must be done."

Mr Beith also committed the party to reversing the chancellor's new tax band of 20p in the pound for the first £2,000 of taxable income. Britain could not afford a tax out now, he said. Money invested in public services, school buildings, hospitals, railways and houses would create jobs and so pay wages

rather than unemployment benefit.

His pledge came as senior party sources disclosed that Mr Ashdown would insist on a commitment to introduce the Liberal Democrats' anti-pollution measures as part of his terms for a deal with the Conservatives or Labour in a hung parliament. He could also require a pledge from a minority government to abide by European Community directives for improving the quality of the environment.

In the party's manifesto, the Liberal Democrats will list their priorities, covering a package of environmental, economic and education measures, plus constitutional reforms, which will form the

basis of any negotiations after the general election.

The final programme, described by one senior source as "positive, rational and reforming", will be launched on Monday. The manifesto will be a "menu with prices", party advisers said yesterday, with all the programmes fully costed.

The "green" priorities set out as part of any deal are expected to focus on litter, filthy streets and air and water pollution. The party's private polling has shown strong support for more green initiatives.

Mr Ashdown has criticised the Conservatives and Labour recently for taking the environment off their agendas, in contrast to their short burst of

energy in the wake of the Green party's increased vote in the 1989 elections to the European Parliament. With the inclusion of the environment among its top priorities, the Liberal Democrats are anxious to promote the party as the only one dedicated to radical policies to cut pollution.

Mr Ashdown, still recovering from the effects of laryngitis, embarks on his "action man" campaign today with three press conferences with seven hours in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff. He will challenge John Major and Neil Kinnock to answer a range of questions on their policies on Europe, education, the environment and other issues.

Patten promises 'ideas' manifesto

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

THE Conservative election manifesto is 25,000 words long and "packed with new ideas", Chris Patten, party chairman, said yesterday.

It contains twice as many promises as the programme on which Margaret Thatcher fought the 1987 election.

The cabinet yesterday spent two hours discussing the document that will be unveiled to a fanfare of publicity next week. They were presented with glossy advance proofs and made last-minute changes ahead of Wednesday's launch to be led by the prime minister and attended by most of the cabinet. The manifesto is half as long again as the 1987 programme and, predictably enough, has a blue cover.

Mr Patten said that after 13 years in power the Conservatives had not run out of steam. He described the manifesto, which he had drafted with Sarah Hogg, head of the Downing Street policy unit, as "a good manifesto, a visionary manifesto, with bags of new ideas."

"Unlike believers in socialism, we are not representatives of a philosophy that clapped out right across the world," he said.

Mr Patten signalled new moves to deliver the prime minister's promise of a society founded on choice, opportunity, ownership and responsibility.

Foreshadowing a renewed Conservative assault on trade union power, he promised greater choice in industrial relations. This was a reference to plans published in a government white paper last month to encourage the spread of personal contracts and direct negotiations between workers and employers.

The manifesto is expected to include as key items:

- New tax breaks to encourage wider share ownership and personal savings.
- An easing or phasing out of inheritance tax.
- The promise of a basic rate of income tax of 20p.
- Opening up more local authority services to competitive tendering.
- Means-tested childcare vouchers to help poorer families.
- A firm commitment to universal child benefit uprated annually in line with inflation.
- Extra help for hard-up pensioners.
- Extra financial incentives to encourage schools to opt out of local authority control and to realise the target of most secondary schools enjoying grant-maintained status after another five years of Tory rule.
- New powers for centrally-appointed commissioners to take over the running of problem schools.
- Creeping denationalisation of British Rail and privatisation of British Coal.
- Greater managerial and financial autonomy for Whitehall departments and public services.
- An end to the Royal Mail's letters monopoly.
- A reduction in the two-year limit on waiting times for hospital operations.
- Further relaxation of the rules for GP fund-holding and expansion of the services they can buy, possibly including maternity services.
- National targets for reducing premature deaths from heart disease, cancer and stroke.
- Inner city initiatives building on the city challenge programme for tackling rundown housing estates.
- Translation of objectives for improving the environment into firm targets.

SNP aims for 40% of vote

By Kerry Gill

ALEX Salmond, the Scottish National Party leader, yesterday set his followers a target of achieving 40 per cent of the vote in the election and told them that the eyes of the world were upon Scotland.

Undeterred by the howl of a North Sea snowstorm, he launched the party's electoral campaign in the fishing village of Macduff, Grampian, at the heart of his own constituency, Banff and Buchan, on the northeast coast. "There is a huge international interest in what is happening here. This election belongs to Scotland," Mr Salmond said, before moving on to the weekly farmers' mart at Comhill.

Mr Salmond, starting the Scottish election campaign, said: "They used to say the nationalist cause was sentimental but it is now possible to be a nationalist in your head as well as your heart. We have hit the ground running with our highest level of support. We think we can change places with Labour."

To do so the nationalists will have to win 40 per cent of the vote. Mr Salmond said that, with support for his party rising, he was confident of reaching the target.

Foreign media organisations have been delighted at the added spice given to the election by the Scottish constitutional issue. Mr Salmond has just completed three interviews for American television channels.

Names to light up a campaign

By Alison Roberts



Walter, from Men's Room to the campaign

A GAGGLE of celebrities attended the launch of the Labour party's election campaign yesterday, promising to bring a glamorous touch to the party's bid for power.

Actors, known for their general allegiance to the Labour party, were represented by Anthony Sher, Colin Welland and Harriet Walter, who starred in *The Men's Room*. A strong showing from the legal world in the shape of Anthony Scriven, QC, former chairman of the Bar Council, and Helena Kennedy, QC, added weight to the celebrity support.

Described by Neil Kinnock as "dear friends", they join a posse of comedians and athletes who will lend their names to the campaign. Jack

Cunningham, Labour's campaign co-ordinator, said that the American-style campaigning was legitimate. "I think it clearly adds to our appeal. If we have famous faces from the bar or the stage, that clearly is an influence in the debate."

The Tories refuse to unveil their line-up until later. Ian Botham was billed as a Tory supporter by one tabloid paper yesterday morning, but his solicitor denied the story last night. Bob Monkhouse, June Whitfield and Nigel Havers have all endorsed the Tories in the past.

The Lib Dems are more serious. They prefer to keep all eyes on the leader.

Leading article, page 17

Viewers fail to spot any TV 'bias'

By Melinda Wittstock, Media Correspondent

POLITICIANS may be convinced that "biased" broadcasters are out to get them, but voters remain sceptical. Most television viewers detect no political bias on the BBC, independent television or Channel 4, a survey by the Independent Television Commission has found.

Despite a constant barrage of complaints from the Conservatives about BBC news coverage, more viewers allege pro-Tory bias on BBC1 and BBC2 than they do Labour leanings: 18 per cent claim that BBC1 favours the Conservatives; 10 per cent say they detect pro-Labour bias.

But pressure from Labour might well have had an effect since the commission's previous *Attitudes to Television* survey in 1990, when 22

per cent accused BBC1 of being pro-Tory and 6 per cent said the channel was pro-Labour. The proportion of viewers believing BBC2 was politically partial to the Tories dropped from 12 per cent to 11 per cent, with the number alleging bias towards Labour rising from 6 per cent to 10 per cent.

Of all the channels, BBC1 is still regarded as the most politically biased, with 29 per cent of respondents claiming that it favoured a political party, down from 31 per cent in 1990.

Independent television was again seen as the least biased in 1991, with the 13 per cent who alleged political bias evenly split between Conservative and Labour. Only 10 per cent of viewers said that Channel 4 was biased, with 6 per cent alleging Labour

leanings and 2 per cent claiming that its output was pro-Tory.

The commission, which surveyed 1,185 adult viewers last November, also found that Labour supporters were more likely than Tory supporters to perceive all programme types, including drama, as fair and unbiased. The survey found that 27 per cent of declared Tory voters thought all television news was discriminatory, compared with 19 per cent of declared Labour voters. Fifteen per cent of Tories thought drama was biased against them, compared with 6 per cent of Labour supporters. The survey also found that 72 per cent of the population believe that television is the most complete and accurate source of news.

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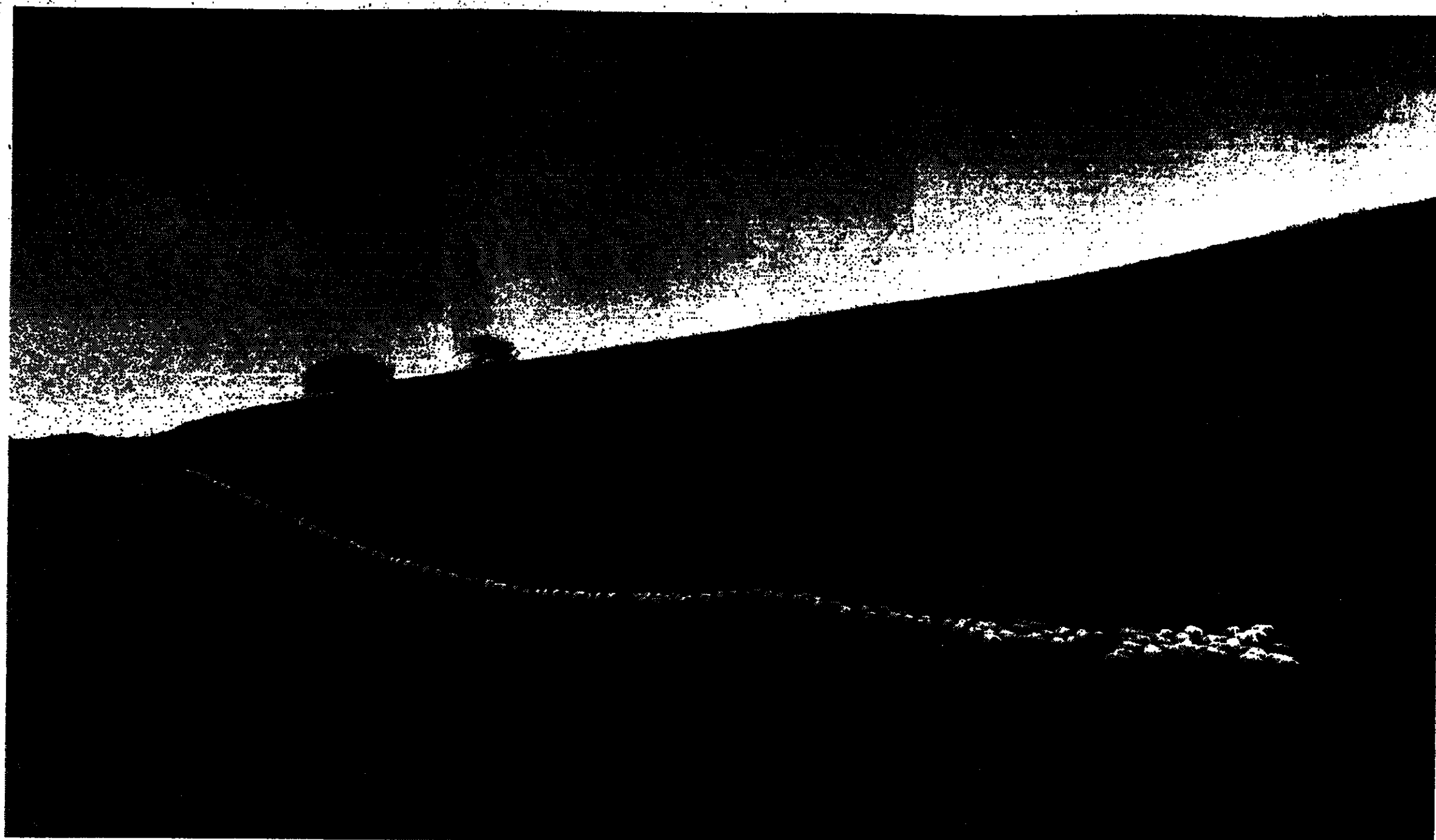
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A patchy network of passenger and freight terminals, and delays in ordering new trains, are predicted in a report by the Tory-dominated transport committee on preparations for the tunnel's opening.

Line of sheep as seen from an InterCity train.



They look rather like the traffic on the M4, don't they? Who are the better businessmen? Those who race to meetings by train at 100mph or those who sit nose to tail on the M4? (Clue: ever known a sheep to make it to chairman?)

INTERCITY

For a copy of the InterCity guide to services ring 081 200 0200.

Cleaner homes may be cause of rise in child leukaemia

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

SCIENTISTS are to examine whether cleaner homes associated with rising living standards are responsible for the increase in leukaemia among children. The investigation will be part of the world's biggest study of the causes of childhood cancer.

The five year study, which begins next month, will gather information on 4,000 children with cancer and on a similar number of healthy children. The £6 million study, organised by the UK Co-ordinating Committee on Cancer Research, which represents the main cancer charities, will test five hypotheses which have linked childhood cancer with virus infections, radiation, chemicals, electromagnetic fields or occupational exposure of the father to these shortly before conception.

Professor Sir Richard Doll, emeritus professor of epidemiology at Oxford University, said that the virus theory was "the most exciting

hypothesis we have to test. It could go a long way to explain a high proportion of childhood cancers."

The incidence of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, the commonest type in childhood, increased ten-fold between the 1920s and the 1950s in the West but remains lower in developing countries. "The suggestion is that improved social conditions created a situation in which the immune system develops in an unsatisfactory way," Professor Doll said.

Professor Mel Greaves, director of the Leukaemia Research Fund Centre, said that less crowded housing and more hygienic living conditions meant that the common infections that children used to catch in the first months of life were often delayed until they started school. Later exposure could provoke an abnormal response of the immune system. "The risk of leukaemia increases with rising living standards," he said.

Professor Greaves said that leukaemia in cats, cattle and birds was caused by viruses. One in 600 children in Britain under the age of 15 gets cancer, about 1,000 new cases a year.

● A study of 70 patients at the Royal Marsden Hospital, London, has found that psychological therapy for people with cancer improves their fighting spirit and helps to reduce anxiety, feelings of helplessness and fatalism, according to a report in the *British Medical Journal*. Patients treated over eight weeks showed a significant benefit that was still evident four months later.

● The rate of oesophageal cancer among men over the past 30 years has risen by 60 per cent in England and Wales, an increase exceeded only by Hungary and Spain, a letter in the same journal says.

Health
L&T section, page 5



Home free: the former hostages John McCarthy, Terry Waite and Brian Keenan, above, after receiving the insignia of the CBE from the Queen at Buckingham Palace yesterday for their "courage and fortitude". Also honoured was Gary Lineker, the Tottenham Hotspur player and England soccer captain — pictured left, with his wife Michelle — who was made an officer of the Order of the British Empire for services to the game.

Afterwards Mr Lineker said that the Queen had enquired after his five-month-old son George, who was admitted to Great Ormond

Street Hospital, central London, last November, suffering from myeloid leukaemia. He has been undergoing chemotherapy. Mr Lineker said that his son was doing all right at present.

HOW TO VOTE IF YOU ARE AWAY FROM HOME, ILL OR DISABLED.

The General Election has been called for 9th April 1992.

Of course, some people will be on holiday, away on business or absent for some other reason. Some are ill or disabled, and therefore unable to attend their polling station. If this applies to you - or if you've moved home since 10th October 1991 - apply for a postal or proxy vote today.

WHEN TO APPLY

Fill in the form and send it by first class post (or take it by hand) to the Electoral Registration Officer for the area where you are registered as an elector.

He or she is normally based at the Council Offices. The address is in the phone book. The form must reach the Electoral Registration Officer no later than noon on 23rd March 1992.

HOW TO APPLY USING THE FORM

Part 1. Fill in part 1. Remember to give the reason why you can't vote in person.

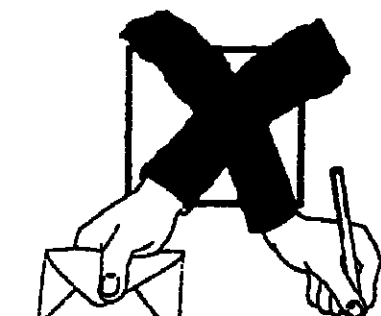
Part 2. Fill in either part 2a or part 2b. If you will be in the UK during the election period you can choose to vote by post or to appoint a 'proxy' (someone who will vote for you at your polling station). Postal ballot papers are normally sent out about a week before polling day, so make sure you take this into consideration when you decide how to vote.

If you wish to vote by post, fill in part 2a. You may not vote by post from outside the UK.

If you wish to appoint a proxy, fill in part 2b. Your proxy must be qualified to vote in UK elections. A proxy may not vote at the same election for more than two people unless they are close relatives - husband, wife, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild.

If you live in Northern Ireland you cannot use this form. You should contact your local Electoral Office.

If you need extra forms ask your Electoral Registration Officer.



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Kasparov dices with disaster

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT
IN LINAres

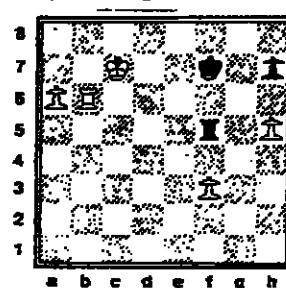
THE world chess champion, Gary Kasparov, dismayed his supporters in the penultimate round of the international chess tournament in Linares, Spain, by failing to capitalise on an overwhelming position against the Russian grandmaster Valery Salov.

Kasparov outplayed Salov to reach an easily winning position, but, in the endgame, pursued the chimera of winning a distant pawn. Salov developed fierce counterplay and Kasparov was lucky to escape with half a point.

With Kasparov's lead cut to one point, and just today's round left, the Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman, who beat the Spaniard Miguel Illescas, could rise to share first place. The Britons Jon Speelman and Nigel Short both drew as Black against powerful Russians.

Round 12: Ivanchuk drew with Short, Timman beat Illescas, Barco drew with Anand, Gelfand drew with Speelman, and Kasparov drew with Salov. The Ljubojevic and Yusupov game was adjourned.

Timman v Illescas:
final position



Police win libel damages

Three senior London police officers accused by the *Evening Standard* of bungling a drugs raid in which an officer was shot won an apology and "substantial libel damages" in the High Court yesterday.

Chief Supt Peter Hampson, Supt David Jarvis and Det Chief Inspector Roy Daisley led a raid on crack dealers in west London, last year. There were several arrests and a quantity of drugs was seized. But, during the operation, an officer was shot and seriously wounded.

The newspaper did not name the three men, but said that senior officers were facing a police inquiry. Scotland Yard said that every aspect of the article was false.

Actor on bail

Freddie Bartman, aged 68, a former actor accused of murdering Lady Cross, aged 74, at an antiques shop in Pimlico, south London, was freed on £70,000 bail by Horseferry Road magistrates' court.

Poll tax prizes

St Edmundsbury council, Suffolk, is offering a prize draw of holidays, food vouchers and cash to people who pay their poll tax by May 22.

Lundy hosts

Nigel Walker and Linzi Takagi, of Ilfracombe, Devon, have been chosen to run the Marisco Tavern, the only pub on Lundy in the Bristol Channel.

Little and large

Nicola Carr, aged 31, of Kirkby-in-Furness, Cumbria, has given birth to a son weighing 15½lb.

BBC lays on night for all seasons

By PETER BARNARD

The March winds do blow!
And we shall have snow

THE above is one of the most entrenched of British weather truisms, dating back to the earliest days of that happy television conjunction, the spring election campaign and the Peter Snow graphic.

But those who wake up on April 10 to find that the clearing of the electoral sky has left them feeling bereft have less than a month to wait for more snow (but no snow), plus rain, sleet, hail, fog, ice, Vivendi and Bogart.

BBC2 has decreed that Saturday May 9 shall be the night of the long forecast. A whole evening of programmes is being devoted to the alleged British obsession with the weather, starting at 8.40pm with a search ("from Bangor to Brazil") for the best weather forecaster in the world and ending in the early hours of Sunday with one of two movies: either *Key Largo*, which the BBC describes as being "a fog-bound classic", starring Humphrey Bogart, or *The Thing*, "a cult sci-fi film about the thawing out of a monster".

These options are offered because the weather extravaganza, in keeping with the weather itself, is "subject to alteration", although not, presumably, weather permitting. The certainties are that the BBC's television forecasters, Ian MacCaskill, Michael

Fish, Suzanne Charlton, Bill Giles and John Kentley, will host the evening from the "weather studio" and that between programmes there will be a "snappy interval", incorporating the best and funniest moments from the weather archive.

This being BBC2, we are also in for education and art. A programme called *Weather Proof* will explain cold fronts and their ilk, as well as finding out why forecasters sometimes get it wrong.

Art's place in the sun consists of Peter Greenaway's film *Act of God*, which is about people who have been struck by lightning. The film is described as "at once hilarious and sobering". As for music, we have Paul Gambaccini on the weather as a recurrent musical theme, raising the dread prospect of Nigel Kennedy playing *The Four Seasons* yet again.

And there is documentary: *40 Minutes* asking if the October storm of 1987 and the stock market crash in the same month were in some way connected.

Just before either the fog-bound classic or the dazed-out monster, BBC 2 is showing *The Winds of Time*, a "revisionist history" by Terry Jones, the former Python, on the role of the weather in British military campaigns.

Oh: and there will be weather forecasts.

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Street Hospital, central London, last November, suffering from leukaemia. He has been diagnosed, the mother says, as all right at present.

Police win libel damages

Three senior London officers accused by the Sunday Standard of libel have won an appeal against a £11,000 damages award. The High Court judge, Lord Taylor, said the officers had been libelled by the newspaper's article. The officers were: Chief Constable Sir John Dand, Deputy Chief Constable Sir John Dand, and Sir John Dand. The article in the Sunday Standard had accused them of being involved in a cover-up of a murder. The officers had won an appeal against a £11,000 damages award. The High Court judge, Lord Taylor, said the officers had been libelled by the newspaper's article. The officers were: Chief Constable Sir John Dand, Deputy Chief Constable Sir John Dand, and Sir John Dand.

Actor on bail

A man accused of murdering a woman has been granted bail. The man, who is 30, was charged with the murder of a 25-year-old woman. He was released on bail for £10,000. The woman was found dead in her home. The man is currently on bail.

Poll tax price

The price of a poll tax has been set at £1. The tax is a new form of local taxation. It is a fixed amount of £1 per person. The tax is to be introduced in 1993. The price of a poll tax has been set at £1.

Lundy hosts

The Lundy Islands are to host a series of events. The events are to be held on the islands of Lundy. The events are to be held on the islands of Lundy. The events are to be held on the islands of Lundy.

Little and large

The Little and Large Islands are to host a series of events. The events are to be held on the islands of Little and Large. The events are to be held on the islands of Little and Large. The events are to be held on the islands of Little and Large.

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The Lundy Islands are to host a series of events. The events are to be held on the islands of Lundy. The events are to be held on the islands of Lundy. The events are to be held on the islands of Lundy.



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Tories hail Budget for election victory

BY JOHN WINDER AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

THE Budget had set the Conservatives on course for an election victory, Michael Howard, the employment secretary, said in the Commons yesterday.

Speaking on the third day of the Budget debate, he said that it would increase incentives, encourage enterprise and help employment to grow. "It is a Budget for industry, a Budget for enterprise and a Budget for jobs," he said.

But Gordon Brown, shadow trade and industry secretary, attacked Mr Howard for making a 30-minute speech without mentioning unemployment. "We would be more impressed by the [Tory] claim to be the party of the poor and low paid if they had not created so many of them", Mr Brown said.

Mr Howard said that the Budget would help to accelerate the end of the recession and advance the progress of steady and sustained recovery. The framework for recovery was already in place, with low taxes, low inflation, and lower interest rates, down four-and-a-half points on the figure of 18 months ago. "We have created the conditions in which enterprise can thrive and jobs can be created, as they were during most of the Eighties."

The measures to assist small firms were particularly important. The proposals to help small firms were particularly significant and would encourage the creation of more small firms and encourage existing ones to grow.

He complained that Labour would not own up to the form their promised tax on wealth would take or the levels at which it would bite. "Instead of encouraging the owners of independent bus-

nesses, Labour would clobber them; instead of removing the obstacles facing small firms, Labour would increase them; instead of motivating people who want to leave something to their family, Labour would punish them."

Labour still had not the faintest idea how a free enterprise economy worked. They remained in thrall to economic illiteracy and he offered to ensure that Labour's economic spokesmen were offered training places on a programme to teach them the basic principles of how free enterprise worked.

The most economically illiterate Labour policy was the proposed national minimum wage. Every independent expert had agreed that it would increase unemployment. Their proposal to increase the minimum wage would lead to even higher unemployment

increases. The CBI estimated that, excluding restoration of differentials, Labour proposals would add £2,500 million to annual costs of employers and destroy 150,000 jobs.

Jim Wallace, Liberal Democrat spokesman, said that he shared Mr Howard's opposition to the minimum wage, but suggested that unemployment would rise as a result of the Budget. Mr Howard replied that they had put in place the framework to encourage job-creation. "The minimum wage would help the people it was intended to help by waningly increasing unemployment. The minimum wage makes no sense."

He said that Robin Cook, Labour's health spokesman, had probably been denied a chance to speak in the Budget debate because of his admission that the minimum wage would cost the National Health Service £500 million without improving patient care.

He predicted that after the Conservatives had won the election, Labour would have another policy review, discover that it was wrong about the minimum wage, the inheritance tax and in opposing the 20p band of income tax.

The basis of the Labour party's appeal was simple: "Aren't you lucky you did not vote for us last time? That you did not elect a Labour government in 1987?"

Labour now believed in nothing, while the Conservatives believed in free enterprise and would be returned to government to preside over a free enterprise economy that would bring greater prosperity to the people, greater resources for public services and greater help for those in need.

Mr Brown said that three years ago there was a Budget for jobs, since when a million jobs had been lost; last year was a Budget for business and 50,000 businesses were lost. Now the country had a Budget to save the Conservative party, which would also lose. "We would be more impressed by the claim to be the party of the poor and low paid if they had not created so many of them."

Challenged by Norman Lamont to say whether Labour would raise taxes, borrow, or both, Mr Brown responded: "What we are saying is that a tax cut is wrong because we should be investing in the economy." The Budget was a complete void because it lacked vision and direction.

In some parts of the country, 100 people were applying for a single job, representing the "real national lottery" with odds of 100-1 and getting longer. "Unless you tackle unemployment and tackle the fear of unemployment, you cannot have a swift recovery." People would hesitate to save, spend or move house, whether they were shopfloor workers or managers.

He called on Mr Lamont to deny that 400,000 jobs would be lost in the next year, as had been predicted by industrial organisations. Mr Howard responded by saying that the only question was which policy would create jobs and that Labour's minimum wage plan would destroy jobs in the retail sector.

Mr Brown, turning to the future, said that the government's education record in which seven million children were being taught in schools in serious need of repair. "It is a scandal which the Conservatives cannot defend. It is not educational neglect."

Moving on to the health service, he said the country did not want the situation in which any opt-out hospital could turn away a patient who did not have enough money. Against shouts of protest from Conservative MPs, he said: "They will listen to what is happening in the NHS and the reason they need to be told is because they don't use it."

Ending his speech, Mr Brown said that the government had brought the country's economic failure. Government ministers had put thousands out of business and out of their homes and millions out of jobs. Now was the time for the people to put them out of office.

MPs salute Speaker tailor-made for lead role

BY ROBERT MORGAN, PARLIAMENTARY STAFF



Glowing tributes to the Speaker were paid by party leaders and senior MPs after Bernard Weatherill made a valedictory statement yesterday marking the end of nine years in one of Westminster's most difficult jobs. All spoke of his fairness and kindness while trying to keep MPs in order and they also expressed their gratitude to Mrs Weatherill for her hospitality.

She became the first "Mrs Speaker" to occupy the Speaker's House at the Commons for 20 years when Mr Weatherill was elected to the Chair in 1983. He was first elected as a Conservative for Croydon North East in 1964. He is a tailor by profession and always carries a silver thimble in his pocket.

John Major said they were coming to the end of a momentous parliament which would see the departure of many distinguished parliamentarians, including the Speaker.

Mr Weatherill had brought wisdom of knowing when to turn a blind eye and when to come down on a sedentary remark from 50 yards. He had shown impartiality despite his long and honourable service in the whips office. That previous

incarnation had not tainted him, Mr Major said.

Mr Major recalled that a previous colleague in the whips office had once said that he had never seen Mr Weatherill get angry or lose his temper. "I think that even after eight years I can say the same."

It had been Mr Weatherill's privilege and sometimes his penance to preside over the first televised proceedings. As a result he had become a star, if not of stage, of screen.

Neil Kinnock said that he and other MPs would always cherish the personal friendship Mr Weatherill had shown. Although there might be other Speakers who would be good tennis players or golfers, as Mr Weatherill was, it was unlikely that there would ever be another who could also run up a suit for a poorly clad MP.

He said that Mr Weatherill, known as Jack to his friends, was "Jack of many trades and master of all that really matter."

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, thanked Mr Weatherill for ensuring that minority parties and independent MPs were always heard, a sentiment echoed by James Molyneux, leader of the Ul-

ster Unionists, who said that Mr Weatherill's recent visit to the province had been greatly appreciated.

Margaret Ewing, parliamentary leader of the Scottish Nationalists invited Mr Weatherill to visit Scotland to advise them on how to run their parliament when it was set up.

Mr Weatherill had earlier thanked all members for their kindness and consideration. He said that in most members' eyes a good Speaker was one who called you to speak today and a bad Speaker was one who did not. A very bad Speaker did not call you today or yesterday.

The House unanimously carried a motion stating: "This House tenders its warmest thanks to Bernard Weatherill for the skill and distinction with which he has maintained the traditions of the Speakership through momentous changes in the practices of the House; thanks him for the genial and wise exercise of his authority; records its appreciation of his fairness and tolerance in dealing with all members; and unites in wishing him a long and happy retirement upon his departure from the Chair and from the House."

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Ministers put their guillotine to work

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS will seek to embarrass Labour by provoking two Commons votes in the final hours of this Parliament on the Budget's proposal for a new income tax band of 20p.

In addition to last night's vote on the new, lower, rate for the first £2,000 of taxable income, the organisation of today's Finance bill enacting the Budget has made room for a further vote. The decision was taken by the government's business managers to underline Tory commitment to lowering taxes.

The Commons meets at 9.30 this morning for a marathon session to push through the Finance bill before the House rises on Monday. The time taken for discussion of each clause will be limited by guillotine.

Behind the scenes, talks between the parties in both Houses has also resolved the fate of the remaining bills. Time limits on debates will be imposed today on the final stages of the Education (Schools) bill and the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) bill.

Government sources con-

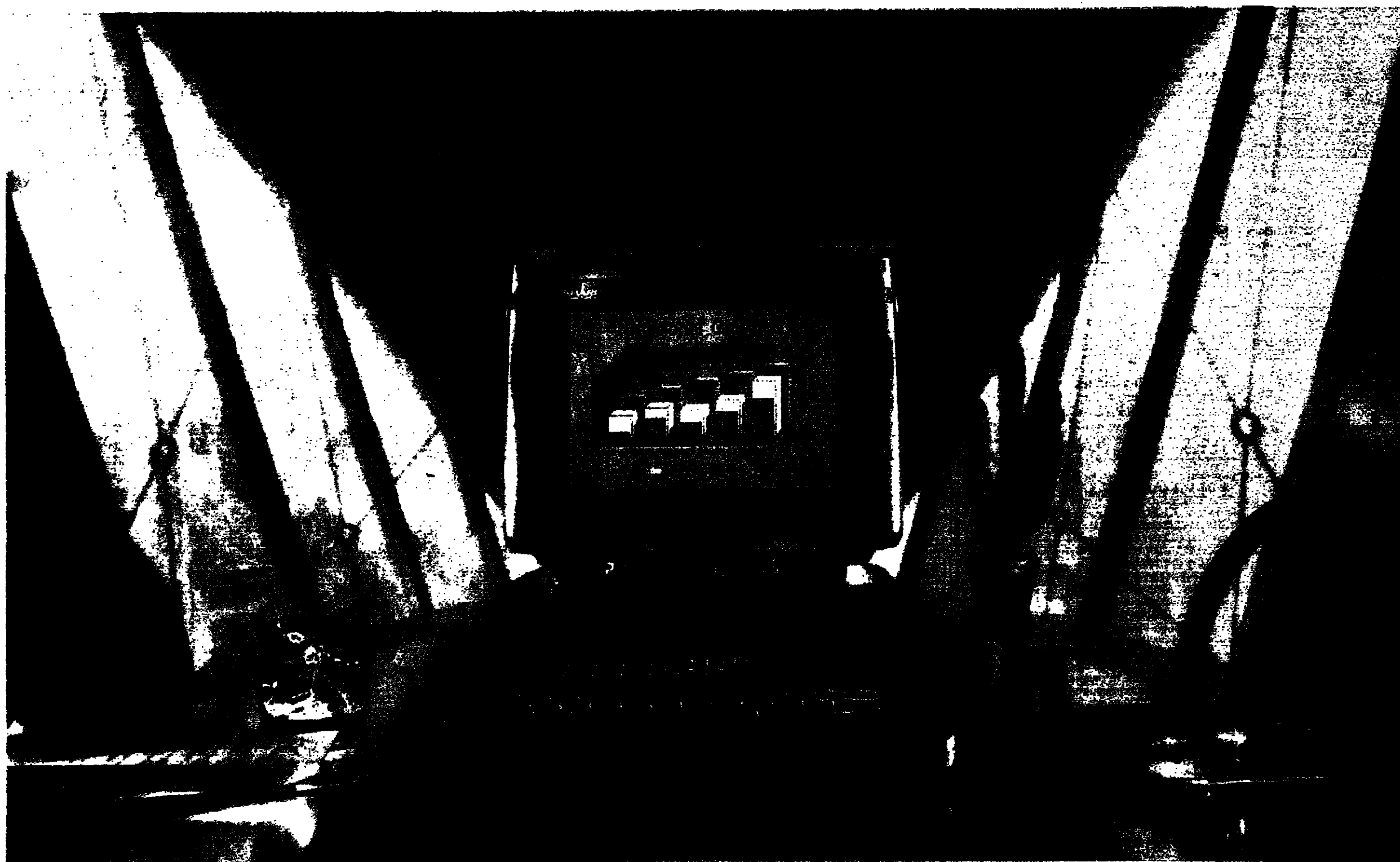
firmed last night that because of opposition from some Tory, Independent, Liberal Democrat and Labour peers and bishops, the Asylum bill would be lost this session. The bill, streamlining the vetting procedures for asylum seekers, had a tough ride through the Commons and was criticised on all sides of the Lords at second reading. The Conservatives are committed to re-introducing the legislation if they win the election.

The talks have saved the Charities bill, modernising the scrutiny and regulation of charities, which started in the Lords but made little progress in the Commons. All parties have agreed to finish work on the legislation on Monday.

The Transport and Works bill, to speed the procedures for approving large road, rail and development schemes, is expected to be passed on Monday despite having little scrutiny in the Lords. Although Liberal Democrat sources said yesterday that they disliked rushing through legislation without proper examination, agreement has been reached to shorten its passage to enactment.

*THE ABOVE EXAMPLE ASSUMES THE FOLLOWING: 1) THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED AMOUNT IS INVESTED AS A SINGLE DEPOSIT ON ACCOUNT OPENING AND ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING EVERY YEAR SUBJECT TO THE OVERALL MAXIMUM OF £9,000 FOR 5 YEARS. 2) THE CURRENT RATE OF INTEREST (11.15%) REMAINS CONSTANT THROUGHOUT THE 5 YEAR TERM. 3) NO WITHDRAWALS OR INTEREST ARE MADE. 4) INTEREST IS CAPITALISED ANNUALLY ON EACH ANNIVERSARY OF OPENING. MINIMUM OPENING BALANCE AND INTEREST RATES ARE VARIABLE. INTEREST CAN BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE ACCOUNT NET OF THE PREVAILING BASIC RATE INCOME TAX (CURRENTLY 25%). TAX-FREE MEANS FREE OF INCOME TAX. AN ADMINISTRATION FEE OF £10 WILL BE CHARGED IF THE HALIFAX TESSA IS TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER TESSA OPERATOR. FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE ACCOUNT CAN BE OBTAINED AT ANY BRANCH OF HALIFAX BUILDING SOCIETY, TRINITY ROAD, HALIFAX, WEST YORKSHIRE, HA1 1NU.

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SHARP
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Ageing Deng looks vainly for a trusted successor

FROM CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

CHINA'S elder statesman, Deng Xiaoping, aged 87, has again proved himself to be a survivor, emerging from retirement to bring the politburo to heel in the face of attacks from hardliners who yearn for a return to the days of Maoism.

His latest victory in bringing about a politburo decision which endorses his reform policies for the next 100 years is, however, not the end of the story. It is likely that those years will not pass without

interference and obstruction from dishevelled dogmatists and their successors. It seems likely that on his deathbed Mr Deng will be fighting for his vision of a modern and prosperous, if totalitarian, China.

But in one area Mr Deng has failed completely. The succession is more unsure than ever. Mr Deng's great weakness has been his choice of men groomed to follow in his footsteps. He had hoped for a quiet life in retirement. He had advocated that power be transferred into the hands of younger men and had rendered all his official posts. That Mr Deng has now had to appear publicly to put his message across suggests that there is nobody he can trust to do it for him.

Jiang Zemin, the Communist party general secretary and the man who Mr Deng had chosen to be his spokesman, has failed him. After the army crushed the pro-democracy demonstrations of 1989, Mr Deng promoted Mr Jiang from party secretary in Shanghai to lead the party and army. Everyone now agrees it was a mistake. Mr Jiang does not have the bearing of a leader and is widely derided. Worse, he continued to side with hardliners, a traitor to Mr Deng's reformist cause. Now Mr Jiang, along with the rest of the politburo, has fallen into line with Mr Deng. But his failure to come to the statesman's aid earlier will weigh against him.

If Mr Jiang were to leave office soon, nobody is in line for the job, which is seen as the most dangerous in China. Mr Deng may find himself growing increasingly frail, looking around desperately for a young champion.

Deng victory, page 1



Deng: fighting for his view of modern China

Indian painters race to serve Bollywood

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

Every week in India, thousands of artists with six-inch brushes and buckets of oil paint work feverishly to produce giant hoardings that adorn every cinema in the country. The deadline for everyone is Thursday, ready for the traditional changeover of films on Fridays.

"Sometimes you get only one or two days to do a painting," says Mohan Singh, a hoarding artist in Delhi for 15 years. "There is no creative satisfaction when you slap paint on that fast. The end result is nothing to be proud of."

Most hoardings are 40ft by 10ft. Painting them is still much cheaper than printing, despite the soaring cost of materials. Artists create their own designs, inevitably involving the faces of the stars. The themes are always love or violence; the former is depicted discreetly, the latter with abandon. Blooded heroes protecting big-eyed women are by far the most popular designs.

Mr Singh works outside in a yard with ten other painters, who chalk out the designs before slapping the colours on the background in bold colours. Only the faces are done with any degree of caution, to ensure that they vaguely resemble the stars. The film distributors provide an outline of what the film is about, and it is left to the artists to try to sell the product.

"Romantic films have slowly started making a comeback," Mr Singh said. "We look for natural talent as well as the ability to work at speed. It is a God-given gift."

scenes, but of course you mustn't be explicit. There must not be any kissing, for example. Violent films are still the most popular."

He is employed at a hoarding-painting firm owned by Chetan Jain, who says his artists have complete freedom to make up their own designs. "Hoarding artists can make or break a film. They are a crucial part of the industry. The problem for everyone is that they have to work extremely fast. A full-size hoarding normally takes four or five days, but there are times when it has to be completed in a day. Only one artist can work on a hoarding at a time. You can't put two people on the same picture because their styles are different."

Smaller hoardings — 20ft by 10ft — are distributed by cycle rickshaws and erected as advertising billboards. The big ones are sent on bullock carts to be put up outside cinemas. Their size means they create a good deal of traffic chaos. The artists paint either on plywood, which is later reused, or on to cloth stretched across a frame, which is destroyed once the film is out of date.

There are eight cinema hoarding studios in Delhi, each racing against a constant deadline to keep up with the torrent of films coming out of Bombay, which is known in the film trade as Bollywood. "We take promising young painters and train them for a few years," Mr Jain said. "We look for natural talent as well as the ability to work at speed. It is a God-given gift."



Circle game: a worker bundles up Hula-Hoops at one of six Peking factories making 10,000 hoops every day

Thatcher takes the sensible approach

Superstitious Tories on the Isle of Wight suddenly noticed that the date for today's visit to the island by Margaret Thatcher was Friday, March 13. They asked her if she wanted to change the date but, said Pat Lambhead, the local Conservative association agent: "She told us she wasn't superstitious and hoped we weren't either."

Barnardo's is benefiting from the generosity of one of its former boys. Bruce Oldfield, the fashion designer, has given a some of his latest designs to be sold in two of their shops in Frinton and Colchester. Dresses worth £1,675 are selling for £150.

Michael Crawford is returning to Britain in June to star in a seven week national tour of "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber". It will be his first live performance here since he left for New York to star in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* in 1987.

Also saxophone player Lee Konitz, aged 65, has won the

\$30,300 (£17,600) International Jazz Prize this week in Copenhagen. He is the third American to win it since the festival was created in 1989 by the Danish Jazz Centre.

A nursing society, the Sigma Theta Tau International, is to honour actress Audrey Hepburn, aged 62, next month for promoting children's health around the world as goodwill ambassador for the United Nations children's organisation, Unicef.

Next week's British tour by trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, aged 74, has been cancelled after he became ill and was taken to hospital in New Jersey, where he underwent surgery yesterday.

Somali-born top model, Iman, the wife of British rock star David Bowie, is to play in a Danish-British film based on the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, *The Shadow*, directed by Jon Bang Carlsen, which will be shot in Denmark and Africa this autumn.

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UN heads for showdown with Iraq on nuclear arms

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

IRAQ failed yesterday in its bid to convince the United Nations Security Council that it was ready to comply with UN resolutions and should be rewarded with a relaxation of sanctions.

Addressing the 15-nation council for a second day, Tariq Aziz, Iraq's deputy prime minister, maintained a hard line — offering only to start talks on key UN de-

mands. As a result, the UN now seems to be heading for what could be its most serious showdown with Iraq since the end of the Gulf war.

After hearing Mr Aziz, the security council agreed on a statement repeating that Iraq had "not yet complied fully and unconditionally" with the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire and "must immediately take the appropriate actions in this regard".

Thomas Pickering, the American ambassador, said: "We are once again in a cat-and-mouse game... There is every willingness to discuss at great length, but no willingness to accept the need for compliance, much less to begin the actions to comply." Britain and the United States appear to have decided to make the destruction of Iraq's main nuclear weapons facility at Al Ather a test case of Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has told Iraq that UN inspectors will soon try to dismantle Al Ather. Western diplomats suggest the installation would make an appropriate allied bombing target if Iraq refuses to cooperate.

America is also considering seeking a new UN resolution seizing Iraqi assets already frozen abroad. Britain and France plan to ask the UN to appoint a special representative to focus attention on Baghdad's maltreatment of its Kurdish and Shia Muslim populations.

Mr Aziz answered point-by-point a list of complaints delivered by the council president on Wednesday. On the key demands of the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and the long-term monitoring of its defence industries, he simply offered to enter into technical talks which would lead to a relaxation of sanctions.

He also refused to make a UN-approved oil sale to pay for relief supplies, again objecting to the requirement that part of the money be diverted to pay war compensation and to finance the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. He said, however, that Iraq was ready to resume talks on a new oil sale scheme.

He expressed no willingness to lift the present economic blockade of the Kurds in northern Iraq and he called a UN resolution criticising their mistreatment a "blatant interference" in Iraq's internal affairs.

Israelis deny sale of Patriot

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON

THE Bush administration is investigating intelligence reports that Israel has sold an American-supplied Patriot missile to China from the stock it was given by Washington during the Gulf war.

The White House has asked the Israeli government directly about the alleged sale but has received only denials, and is now considering sending a team to Israel to count the Patriots still deployed there.

According to a report in the *Washington Times*, US officials are concerned that China could use an Israeli-supplied Patriot to develop counter-measures, rendering the Patriot system ineffective against Chinese ballistic missiles.

Last night the office of Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, denied that Israel had sold a Patriot missile or its technology to China. "Such talk is completely and totally groundless and baseless," Ehud Gol, a spokesman for Mr Shamir, said.

Israeli denials have not satisfied US senators or congressmen, who called on the Bush administration to investigate. Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate armed services committee, said the allegations were worrying. The Patriot system proved successful in the Gulf war in intercepting Iraqi Scud missiles fired at Israel and Saudi Arabia.

China's defence industry, considered to be one of the best at taking a foreign-made missile and building its own version, has become one of the world's biggest arms suppliers to the Third World.



Happy hour: former President Nixon shares a joke with George and Barbara Bush at a black-tie dinner. Mr Nixon has criticised the president for his half-hearted support for the democratic reforms in the former Soviet Union but said there was no rift between them

Cheques scandal puts Democrats on defensive

Capitol Hill's elite fears public disgrace and loss of jobs since the House made its report on the "Rubbergate" affair, Martin Fletcher writes in Washington

UNITED States congressmen were scheduled to vote today on how many of their own political careers to destroy.

Yesterday the 296 members who bounced thousands of cheques at the private House of Representatives bank before it was closed last autumn were known only by account numbers. By tonight many, conceivably all, of those members will face public unmasking.

"Rubbergate" not only involved substantial sums. To an already disgraced public the abuse epitomised the privileged, self-serving lifestyle of a Capitol Hill elite that was perceived to be letting the rest of the country rot. A poll this week showed public approval of Congress at 22 per cent, the lowest ever. To be named as an offender would be tantamount to electoral execution in November's elections.

No taxpayers' money was involved, but perceptions are everything. Newt Gingrich, the Republican whip, believes that up to 65 congressmen could lose their seats. The Democrats' 33-year control of the House could be loosened. President Bush, who is blaming Congress for America's domestic woes, could receive a big re-election filip.

Guy Vander Jagt, the Republican congressional campaign chairman, has written to all Republican congressional candidates urging them to exploit fully the scandal.

There has been widespread panic on Capitol Hill since the House ethics committee reported on the scandal late last week. Congressmen have begged party leaders to limit

the disclosures. Some have discussed early retirement. Jack Russ, the sergeant-at-arms responsible for the bank, is known to have cashed bad cheques worth \$56,000 (about £32,450) and his claim to have been robbed and shot through the jaw while walking his dog last week is being questioned. No suspects have been found.

The committee investigated the 66 worst offenders in the 39 months ending last October, when the magnitude of the abuse first came to light, and found they had bounced about 20,000 cheques worth nearly \$11 million. A congressman earns \$129,500 a year.

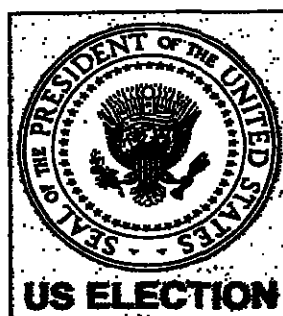
To preserve impartiality the bipartisan committee had the offenders' names kept secret even from itself, and recommended the naming of those 24 past and present members whose overdrafts exceeded their next month's salary in eight of the 39 months.

That proposal was embraced by Tom Foley, the House Speaker, who has admitted to bouncing a cheque to buy stereo equipment, but the Republicans want all 296 cheque-bouncers to be named. They calculate that many more Democrats than Republicans will be on the list as they have a 102 majority, that several leading Democrats will be implicated, and that their

own best chance of recapturing the House is to bring it crashing down.

First-term Republicans, with nothing to fear, first called for full disclosure, arguing that the committee's criterion excluded some of the worst offenders. One wrote 119 bad cheques worth \$215,000, another 800 worth \$166,000.

They won over their party leaders, who had been worried that "Rubbergate" would be more of an issue in Republican suburbs. Mr Bush has added his voice to those de-

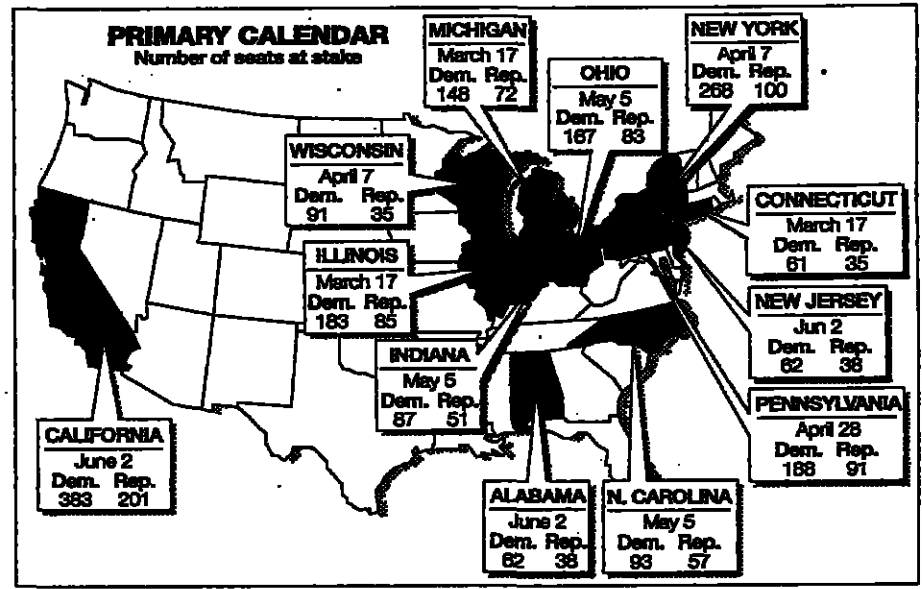


manding that all transgressors be named, and the White House is said to be privately delighted by the Democrats' discomfort. Rank-and-file Democrats now find themselves in an impossible situation, knowing that to vote against full disclosure would look like a cover-up. They also know that, how-

ever they vote, their opponents will challenge them to make their bank records public this November. The committee said written statements would be made available to any member who asked for one.

The bank occupied an ornate room in the same first-floor Capitol corridor as the House restaurant, where members were last year found to have run up nearly \$700,000 in unpaid debts. At the House post office nearby four cashiers have recently been charged with purloining \$35,000, and another reportedly sold customers cocaine.

On the corridor's wall appears the inscription: "This government, offspring of our choice, uninfluenced and unawed, has a just claim to your confidence and support."



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Under our procedure for reviewing subscriptions annually, all borrowers will be

notified of any revised interest rate and monthly payment with their annual statement in January 1993. No automatic change will be made to borrowers' monthly payments before that date.

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Any borrowers whose mortgage is not covered by any of the above will be advised individually by letter.



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Tribes clash in Kenya

FROM SAM KILEY IN NAIROBI

KENYA'S nascent democracy was threatened by violent conflict yesterday after tribal warfare in the west of the country left 30 people dead. Both the government and opposition parties accused each other of forming private armies to foment long-standing tribal feuds.

Kalenjin and Luo tribesmen armed with spears and bows and arrows have turned down the district boundaries between Kericho and Kisumu into no-go areas. Territorial disputes between the two tribes blew up into open violent conflict at the end of last year. But this week the confrontations spread to the idyllic lakeside town of Kisumu, on the shores of Lake Victoria, where two Luo demonstrators were shot dead by police on Wednesday.

Yesterday paramilitary police of the general service unit were accused of unleashing a "reign of terror" in Kisumu. According to a local resident: "The local security council warned all the schools to stay closed today and then the GSU went on the rampage. They have been driving around the town shooting indiscriminately, causing scores of injuries."

President Moi, an unwilling convert to multi-party democracy in Kenya, has often warned that pluralism will increase tribal tensions and result in anarchy since he allowed the introduction of opposition parties. But the opposition allege the president is provoking the unrest.

Exiles vote to back de Klerk reforms

FROM GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africans abroad have begun voting in their country's referendum on constitutional reforms, and the initial trend is firmly in favour of President de Klerk's initiatives for multi-racial government.

From Chile to Madagascar, 63 special polling stations have been opened in advance of the referendum in South Africa next Wednesday. The briskest polling was reported in London, where more than 2,000 voters were cast in the first few hours. The first 60 voters to emerge from the South African embassy all told reporters they supported Mr de Klerk's negotiations with the black majority.

About the only white citizens unable to participate are 37 personnel manning Antarctic weather stations. The department of home affairs could not establish polling facilities for them in time.

At home, the campaigns of the ruling National party and the far-right Conservative party are becoming increasingly unpleasant, with the rivals flailing each other with the symbols of nazism and communism. An advertisement by the Nationalists depicts a swastika with the legend: "This one cost 45 million lives and took six years of war to stop." Beside it is the similar emblem of the paramilitary Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), with the words: "How many lives will this one cost? Your vote will decide." The Nationalist posters on the streets show a masked gunman of the AWB's elite "Iron Guard", with the message: "You have the power to stop this man."

The Conservatives are equally blunt in accusing the government of being in league with the Communist

party, the principal ally of the African National Congress in the constitutional negotiations. Andries Treurnicht, the Conservative leader, says: "English speakers must not let the National party confuse the real issue — the truth is that a 'yes' vote is a vote for black communist domination." To underline the point, his party's posters depict Mr de Klerk kneeling in supplication at the feet of Nelson Mandela, the ANC president.

Jacques Theron, the Conservative leader in Johannesburg city council, responded to heckling by a liberal student audience by saying his party would rather side with the AWB, despite its neo-Nazi

philosophy, than with the Communists. Mr de Klerk is taking the right-wing propaganda seriously. In a statement, he affirmed that his party was "fiercely anti-communist" and would ensure that communist ideology had no part in the "new" South Africa. Citing its commitment to democracy, private enterprise and freedom of religion, he said: "I reject with contempt the allegation that we are giving in to communist pressure."

The ANC, while tacitly supporting the government in the whites-only electoral battle, is more concerned about political violence in black communities in which 83

people have been killed and 241 injured in the past week. It noted that random attacks on commuters and assassinations invariably increased whenever political negotiations were at a critical point.

A gloomy portent of economic hardship in the event of a right-wing victory has emerged from Cape Town, where fruit farmers say millions of rands worth of canned goods are in storage until the referendum result is known. Foreign buyers have threatened immediate repositioning of sanctions if the Conservatives win.

Diary, page 16
Athletes meet ANC, page 40

Cape warned of sour grapes

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa's wine producers have been warned that they could drown in their own product if there is a "No" vote in next week's referendum on constitutional reform and international sanctions are reimposed.

With the easing of sanctions in the past year, South African wines have begun to reappear on the shelves of Sainsburys and Oddbins. There have been sniffs of approval from the most discerning British and European wine writers who have attended tastings organised by the South African industry and judged the Cape's Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs almost on a par with Australia's. Cape wine producers have been chuckling all the way to their banks.

But it could all go wrong if there is a majority "No" vote on Tuesday, according to KWV, the wine producers' co-operative, which controls output. In a circular to its 5,000 members, it said: "You will feel the considerable financial benefits for producers in your pockets after the 1991 and 1992 payments to KWV members. With new sanctions, the wine industry would have to revert to bulk exports of unidentified wine-alcohol to the international market. Wine-alcohol, if it can be sold at all, realises seven per cent of the income of natural wine."

At the height of sanctions, South Africa disposed of much of its vast wine lake through sales to East European countries. The product

filtered into Western supermarkets labelled Ruritania Rouge or whatever. But The KWV circular states bluntly: "The East European commodity markets no longer exist as an alternative." It was the personal prerogative of wine farmers to vote "Yes" or "No", the circular added, but there should be no uncertainty about the drastic results a majority "No" vote would hold for the wine industry.

The Western Cape-based fruit canning industry has also sent up alarm signals about the consequences of a "No" vote. Canned fruit exports earn South Africa about \$5 million a year, and like the wine farmers, fruit growers are important employers in an economically depressed region.

Clinton fails to win heart of Daley machine

FROM PETER STOTHARD US EDITOR, IN WASHINGTON

BILL Clinton is not "buttering up" Mayor Daley of Chicago. That was the official word yesterday as the Clinton campaign fought to add Illinois next week to its impressive list of Super Tuesday primary victories.

Richard M. Daley is not to be confused with his legendary father, Richard J. Daley, who played king-maker for John Kennedy in 1960 and led the "police riot" at the 1968 Democratic convention. But the son's endorsement is still worth something and the governor of Arkansas has not got it.

The two men appeared together for what was billed as a greeting and photo-opportunity. "Political machine meets son of political machine," according to one local observer. The mayor spoke generously of the governor's ability "to bring some light at the end of the tunnel for people here in Chicago and throughout the country". But when he was asked if that constituted an endorsement, he replied brusquely "No".

Mr Daley's tetchiness was as nothing compared to Mr Clinton's denial that he might be considering the Chicago mayor for his vice-presidential running mate. Reporters were stunned at the vehemence of the governor's denial. The mayor "glowered" and the governor "frowned", according to *The New York Times*.

Any rift between the two men is unlikely to hamper Mr Clinton's campaign. Since senior Daley's death in 1976, the Daley organisation's ability to influence the success of candidates has diminished sharply. Even in the last year of his life he was unable to swing Illinois behind Jimmy Carter.

Mr Daley's passion is the building of a new Chicago airport — an ambition which all politicians trapped by Super Tuesday's power failure at the current O'Hare complex would happily endorse. If fresh sex and financial allegations were to hit Mr Clinton later — as predicted by the rival Paul Tsongas campaign yesterday — the mayor might take off his hard hat for a few days and use his father's old ticker to the smoke-filled rooms. Until then, Mayor Daley is uncommitted.

In another development, former President Ford joined his predecessor, Richard Nixon, and other senior Republicans in calling for Patrick Buchanan to end his challenge to President Bush.

Young Germans given painful history lesson at Nazi trial



Schwammberger was tracked to Argentina

THE modern history class was in court waiting for the lesson. The girls were jeans and looked sloppy. The boys, many with earrings, had long hair. They were vastly different from the smart, brutally efficient young people once commanded by Josef Schwammberger, the alleged Nazi war criminal the class had come to see.

As an SS lieutenant and slave labour camp commandant, Herr Schwammberger is said to have smashed the heads of babies against walls, set his dog Prinz on women, and killed Jews as a "hobby". Now, looking all of his 80 years, he shambles into court looking the image of a benign old gentleman bewitched by unfamiliar surroundings. The history class could scarcely believe him capable of murdering at least

50 Jews by himself and of being directly involved in the deaths of thousands of others. Yet those are the crimes which 34 witnesses have told the court he perpetrated while running the Polish slave labour camps and ghettos at Rowadow, Przemysl and Mielec between 1942 and 1945.

Arrested at the end of the war by the French, with eight sacks full of diamonds and gold tooth fillings, Herr Schwammberger disappeared from an American military train in 1948 while on the way to a war crimes trial. For years he was one of the ten most wanted men on the list drawn up by Simon Wiesenthal, the Nazi-hunter. Tracked down in Argentina after the German government paid a record bounty of 500,000 marks (£175,000)

Ian Murray reports from Stuttgart on the trial of a benign-looking old gentleman accused of taking a hand in concentration camp atrocities

to an anonymous informer, he was extradited in 1950 and went on trial last June. Young neo-Nazis demonstrated for his release outside the State Court here when the case opened. Since then, his trial has become more of a focus for a generation trying to understand the most shameful period of their country's history.

The evidence is often harrowing. This week Mrs Anna Zaryn told her story in broken, accented English. She has lived in Canada since 1948 and prefers to speak the language she has learnt

since then to the German language she had to obey as a girl of 15 when her parents moved to Przemysl.

One day her parents were among hundreds of Jews rounded up and put on a train. She wanted to go with them, but her mother threatened to hit an SS soldier in the face if she tried. "My mother said, 'You know what will happen then. He will kill me. Do you want that to happen?' Knowing my mother, I knew she would do it. I just turned around and left, and that has been haunting me to this day." The train

went to Treblinka, and she never saw her parents again. Mrs Zaryn described Herr Schwammberger as "a person everybody feared, always with his dog and always with a stick". She had watched two "actions" when he ordered people shot. On one occasion 120 had died. On the other, she had hidden in an attic as 900 more were killed and their bodies set on fire.

All the other surviving children - bar one who later died in Auschwitz - had been shot when she and a tiny handful of survivors from the ghetto were loaded on a cattle wagon and sent away. Of the 28,000 Jews in the town when Herr Schwammberger arrived in late 1942, only 100 were alive when he left in 1943. Sitting in a fawn cardigan,

his distinctive blue eyes half shut, the accused made copious notes of her evidence, sighed heavily several times, but seemed far less moved than did the history class. He does not deny having been the camp commandant, but admits to shooting only one person. He says the witnesses are all lying or exaggerating, and that he recognises none of them.

The verdict is unlikely before the summer. Had Herr Schwammberger been found guilty at the war crimes trial which he was on the way to when he escaped, there is every likelihood that he would have been sentenced to death. But there is no capital punishment in modern Germany.



Wiesenthal: accused was among his top ten

Nazi art, L&T section, page 3

Motorcycle gunmen kill Andreotti's Sicilian ally

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

PRESUMED Mafia hitmen yesterday shot and killed Salvatore Lima, the leader of the Christian Democratic party faction in Sicily and an MEP. Signor Lima, aged 64, was a loyal lieutenant of Giulio Andreotti, the prime minister, and as an MEP repeatedly denied allegations that he was himself linked to organised crime.

Two men on a motorcycle ambushed Signor Lima as he was being driven to his office in Palermo. He was wounded by the first pistol shot, but managed to climb out of the car and tried to escape. However, one of the gunmen fired again, leaving the politician dead on the pavement in a pool of blood. Two associates of Signor Lima were also in the car and were unhurt. The motorcycle used by the assassins was later found by police abandoned on the outskirts of the city.

In Strasbourg, Euro-MPs observed a minute's silence in memory of their Sicilian colleague and some laid wreaths on his seat in parliament. Signor Lima had been an MEP since 1984.

In Rome, Nidde Iotti, the president of the chamber of deputies, noted that the murder took place a day after the killing of Sebastiano Corrado, a Neapolitan councillor for the Democratic (former communist) Party of the Left. He had worked for the local health authority where he fought against corruption schemes of the Camorra, the Mafia's Neapolitan cousin. The impression that the Italian authorities were pow-

erless against crime gangs was heightened by the discovery yesterday near Milan of the body of Luciano Carugo, an industrialist known as "the king of asphalt", because of his lucrative road repair business. He was kidnapped on Monday and murdered. "These are all facts that strike us very deeply," Signor Iotti said.

A statement by the Sicilian branch of the Christian Democrats said the assassination of Signor Lima put to shame his enemies who persistently accused him of being close to the Mafia. "All those who have consciously or unconsciously launched falsehood and calumny must feel the weight of the things that were said unjustly."

Signor Lima was known in the Italian press as the "Victor" of Signor Andreotti in Sicily and the undisputed "boss" of Palermo, where he served as mayor for seven years. The two men were due to preside over an election campaign meeting later this month.

In 1989 Giuseppe Pellegrini, a Mafia gangster turned informer, accused Signor Lima of ordering the assassination of Piersanti Mattarella, the Christian Democrat regional government president, in 1980, and the killings in 1982 of Pio La Torre, the Sicilian communist leader, and General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa, the government's special crime-fighter. The investigation did not believe the Mafia accusations and Pellegrini later retracted.



Strike weapon: hooded Spanish workers fire a home-made rocket at police during a protest yesterday against the threatened closure of steelworks with a loss of 1,800 jobs in the Basque town of Llodio. Others blocked roads and a railway line with blazing barricades

Russia bans recall of old parliament

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

MOSCOW and the Russian authorities seemed satisfied yesterday that they had won the conservative opposition and forced a split in the ranks of those trying to reconvene the old Soviet parliament, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, next Tuesday.

Statements from Russian Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian parliament, and Gavril Popov, the mayor of Moscow, were followed by a concession, indicating that - as far as the democrats were concerned - the main danger was probably past.

As of last night, the planned Soviet congress was outlawed across Russia by a decision of the Russian parliament's presidium. The demonstration called to accompany the congress and endorse its decisions, however, is to be permitted. The ban

on the congress was announced on Wednesday after a special session of the parliamentary presidium, held in camera.

The presidium banned the congress as "a threat to state sovereignty". Explaining the decision in parliament yesterday, Mr Khasbulatov said: "The congress was directed against us, the highest legislative organ in the land, and we should not hesitate to act. The holding of a congress on our territory without the agreement of our parliament is unconstitutional."

The demonstrators would be allowed on to the territory of the Kremlin. They would not, however, be provided with a meeting hall or given the opportunity to convene a congress. According to *Izvestia*, any attempt to hold a formal meeting on Kremlin territory would be prevented by the police, and no provision would be made to stop the traffic on the main thoroughfares during the evening rush-hour.

If the Moscow authorities stick to their decision, and if conservative leaders refrain from attempts to stage a provocation, the city could be spared the sort of angry clashes between police and demonstrators seen during the banned rally on February 23.

Last night Yuri Golik, a lawyer and organiser of the outlawed congress, argued that they would be able to muster a respectable turnout. He insisted that the USSR congress and standing parliament were never constitutionally dissolved.

Rutskoi wins freedom for officers

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

ALEKSANDR Rutskoi, the Russian vice-president, and the commanders of the former Soviet army yesterday secured the release of ten officers held hostage by Armenian fighters.

Mr Rutskoi, a Russian nationalist who seems likely to grow in prestige after directing efforts to free the hos-

tages, called for all regular troops to be withdrawn from the war zone and replaced by professional volunteers. He joined army commanders at a news conference where all gave full vent to the fury felt by the top brass over attacks on the former Soviet garrison.

"The flow of coffins northwards has to stop," Mr

Rutskoi declared, saying that 74 servicemen had been killed and 238 wounded.

The high profile adopted by Mr Rutskoi will not only strengthen his own nationalist camp but also boost his ability to defend President Yeltsin from diehard attacks.

Leading article, page 17

Threat to nuclear arsenal

FROM REUTERS IN MOSCOW

NUCLEAR weapons security has sharply declined in the former Soviet Union and its vast atomic arsenal could be subject to terrorist attacks or blackmail, according to a scientist at the Chelyabinsk-70 nuclear centre in the Urals.

"Technical security... has remained at the previous level," Gennady Novikov told the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper. "But security in the broad sense, taking into account the political and psychological situation, has certainly declined sharply. A few years ago we had no concept of nuclear terrorism. Now we speak about the possibility of deliberate seizure of nuclear munitions."

Mr Novikov painted a picture of rival government departments competing for control of nuclear weapons, saying state control over them was still not good. "The variety of departments is such that we hide information from each other, including information affecting security," he said. He added that nuclear weapons were being removed from the troubled Transcaucasus faster than new depots could be built to store them safely.

lark reform



Off the track: Swedish rescue teams examining a Gothenburg tram which jumped its tracks and ran downhill, killing at least 11 people yesterday

Desert gains ground in rainless Spain

FROM FRANK SMITH IN MADRID

THE people of the medieval city of Segovia in central Spain have a tradition of parading statues of saints through the streets. But nobody can recall when one of the town's oldest and most revered statues of Christ was last seen in a public procession. This week it was solemnly escorted through the narrow cobbled streets in a desperate attempt to persuade the Almighty to bring rain to the province's parched fields.

Almost no rain has fallen on the Castilian plain this winter. The area is one of many in Spain suffering the effects of widespread drought, after one of the driest winters for many years. Because of its proximity to Madrid, the province of Segovia is dotted with reservoirs and dams, which supply much of the capital's water.

But the reservoir at Madrouelo, about 100 miles north of Madrid, usually dotted with small boats, looks like a marine cemetery, with dozens of small craft beached on the parched and cracked mud.

With water levels dangerously low - reservoirs are down to 40 per cent capacity, a drop of 20 per cent compared with this time last year - farmers' losses so far have been estimated at about £1 billion nationwide.

Representatives from the main farming regions have asked the ministry of agriculture for help, but the government says any aid will have to come from the regional authorities, not from Madrid. So far, water restrictions have not been introduced in any of the main agricultural areas and farmers have been able to water their crops. But

waiting for the rains to come has made many farmers unsure of themselves; they have not yet decided what to plant and time is running short.

Among the threatened crops are the rice and cotton in the southern province of



Andalusia and cereals in Castile and Extremadura in central Spain. But there is also uncertainty in the normally wet northern regions. Cattle farmers in Galicia, Navarre and Aragon, for example, are

experiencing their driest winter for three years and are desperately short of good pasture.

While the short-term threat to farming demands immediate attention, the prospect of a long and damaging drought has highlighted deeper concerns about the long-term effect on Spain's environmental balance, particularly the process of desertification. Through a combination of drought, forest fires and outmoded farming techniques, Spain is losing about a billion tonnes of topsoil every year.

Seventeen per cent of Spain's land mass is already officially desert, and a further nine million hectares is said to be under threat. The Spanish agriculture ministry estimates that it would take £2 billion to begin to halt the process.

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Literary tortoises

Daniel Johnson on short lives and long books

There are no shortcuts to literary eminence. Works of erudition normally require the leisure that comes with private means or, more commonly, an academic sinecure. Those who earn their living by writing as journalists generally lack the energy to undertake grand projects of scholarship. To conduct such a work to a successful conclusion while running a large farm in Ireland is no mean achievement.

Thomas Pakenham's *The Scramble for Africa* deserved to win the W.H. Smith literary award. Pakenham is that rare animal, the scholarly dilettante. He is, of course, from a famous stable. At yesterday's prizegiving, a roomful of literati almost emptied when members of the Pakenham family were summoned to a photocall. But the others differ from him in one important respect: his parents, two of his sisters, his wife, two of his nieces and many other relatives are all writers of distinction, but all are professionals.

One thing irks him: the other members of his family write faster than he does. His latest book took 12 years; his two sisters, Antonia and Rachel, and his father, Lord Longford, have alone produced 26 volumes in that time. Does this matter? Why do some historians, such as Edward Gibbon, B.G. Niebuhr or Lord Macaulay, take decades to write their great works (some, such as Lord Acton, never finish at all) while others — Leopold Ranke, Theodor Mommsen or A.J.P. Taylor — spend their active lives in a frenzy of publication?

To be prolific in print is a gift of the gods. Those gods were, however, Greek; and we are wise to beware of Greek gifts. One may envy Nietzsche: he wrote some of his later works in days; but who would pay the price of the madness that followed? Many may aspire to the titanic productivity of a Tolstoy or a Goethe; but few would willingly endure the fiendish egotism of the former or the lifelong self-denial of the latter, whose bitter words (in Carlyle's translation) echo down the years: "Who never ate his bread in sorrow... He knows ye not, ye heavenly powers."

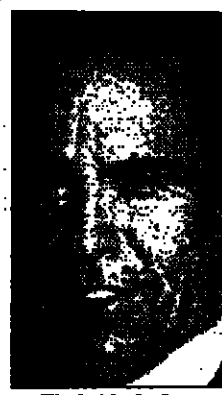
Intellectual productivity is determined by temporality in utterly different ways. The premature deaths of Pushkin, Büchner or Keats were real losses; not so those of Rimbaud, Rilke or Wilde. Gibbon, who spent 24 years pondering and writing his *Decline and Fall*, was thereafter so idle that his death at 57 was a merciful release. Some writers exhaust themselves with a single spasm of creativity; others illuminate a whole century with their steady glow. The question of how long a book may take an author to write is subordinate to another: how many it has been granted to him to write.

Take philosophy, in which one mind may take many volumes to express what another can accomplish in one or two. The schoolman St Thomas Aquinas, who produced the metaphysical counterpart to the medieval cathedrals in the thousands of pages of the *Summa contra Gentiles* and the *Summa Theologiae*, had still much to say when the "angelic doctor" was carried off at 49. Yet the watchmaker Baruch Spinoza, whose life was even shorter, said everything he wanted in one short book, the *Ethics*, and died content.

Fiction, and all books that depend essentially on imagination rather than reading, are in theory susceptible to shortcuts. In practice, long hours of drudgery are as inseparable from the biographies of the great novelists, poets and playwrights as they are from those of scholars. My father, Paul Johnson, who has produced half a dozen long history books, is emphatic that there is no such thing as "writer's block", that most production difficulties are due to excessive research, inadequate planning or lack of self-discipline at the writing stage. In most cases, it is surely true that the poisons that induce literary sterility are banal, even if the cures are not. But the springs of inspiration remain too deep to be fathomed: even the best writers cannot explain how they do what they do. Discipline is a necessary, but not a sufficient, attribute of an emergent writer. Ecclesiastes was right: "Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." A Kafka can, it is true, work for years in an insurance office while subverting an entire literary culture with his nocturnal experiments in prose. For a lucky few, writing can be a release, a liberation of the spirit. For most people, though, it is just hard work.

America's romance with the Mafia has been rekindled by the latest trial, writes Charles Bremner

The Mob's finest hour



Their kind of guy: Beauty in Bugy

Sammy the Bull chopped his brother-in-law up into little pieces and had him FED TO THE DOGS. So read the headline in yesterday's *New York Post*, the latest in a feast from the trial of John Gotti, the alleged Godfather. Thanks to FBI bugs and Sammy Gravano's decision to break the code of *omertà* and rat on his boss, New York has been relishing every lurid detail of life in the Mafia. Prime among these were Mr Gotti's tape-recorded order to murder a subordinate because "he refused to come when I called" and the occasion that the hit-men wore white trenchcoats and Russian hats to ambush Paul Castellano, Mr Gotti's alleged predecessor as head of the Gambino family.

The entertainment comes from the way the wiseguys talk and act like movie mobsters. *La Cosa Nostra* may be on its last legs, brought down by prosecution and overtaken by more murderous gangs of Colombians, Chinese, Russians and Jamaicans, but these upstarts cannot compete with the operatic performance of the Dapper Don and his henchmen.

One might wonder how people can be so enthralled by homicidal criminals at a time when violence is poisoning American life. There is, however, no paradox. The terror of the real world comes in the form of teenage muggers and drug dealers. Mr Gotti and his clan spring from another tradition, that of the romantic outlaw. Every culture has its heroic lawbreakers — witness Robin Hood — but America does it bigger and better than anyone.

Rudolph Giuliani, the prosecutor who made his name locking up the bad guys of Wall Street in the 1980s but failed to convict Mr Gotti, noted this week that the obsession with the underworld springs from the fact that America was born in a rebellion and still worships those who defy authority. The tradition took off in the 19th century when desperadoes from Jesse James to Butch Cassidy were seen as heroes fighting the

incorporation of the West by industrial barons.

Almost as soon as the outlaw's romance passed to the gangster in the 1920s, something odd happened: popular culture, in the form of pulp novels and then Hollywood, merged the folklore with the reality, creating a symbiosis in which criminals fed on their fictional personas and vice-versa. Bonnie and Clyde and Machine Gun Kelly carefully tended their showbiz images. Cagney copied Capone and the Chicago gangster vetted the script of *Scarface*. When Bugsy Siegel was sent to Los Angeles by his partners Meyer Lansky and Lucky Luciano, he made friends with

Clark Gable and even took a screen test. When Robert De Niro played a Gotti type in *Goodfellas* two years ago, he "hung out" in Little Italy to pick up the patter of the modern wiseguys. In the other direction, Mr Gotti chose as his model De Niro's Capone of the 1988 film *The Untouchables*. Siegel, a maniac who killed for fun and founded Las Vegas, is the latest of the old-timers to be revived. Warren Beatty, who produced *Bugsy*, has been busy pointing out how much he has in common with the charming gangster-rebel. "What the hell is the difference between Las Vegas and the junk-bond market and

most of what is going on on Wall Street?" he asked the other day.

The words could have come straight from Mr Gotti's soliloquies. The Don and his underlings are exploiting a cycle in the Zeitgeist in favour of the virile dissident. In a time of recession and revulsion against business greed, everyone wants to act the rebel. Mr Gotti's defiant attitude is an extreme version of the "in-your-face" pose now affected by the hip from Greenwich Village to Santa Monica.

The only trouble is that Mr Gotti and his gang are said by the experts to be pale imitations of the old-style mafiosi, with their codes of honour and sense of chivalry. Nothing could better demonstrate the twilight of the Mob than Mr Gravano's treason and the shooting this week of the sister of a Brooklyn gangster who also "sang to the Feds" about Mr Gotti.

However, what they lack in grandeur, the Gotti gang make

up with a cartoon-like obsession with feeding the folkies. Their evil may be of the most banal kind, but they are playing straight from their own screen-play. This is quite understandable given the industry that has lately grown up around "organised crime". Almost every small-time crook is hustling his memoirs and selling concepts to Hollywood, a business which has become highly profitable now that the Supreme Court has overruled a New York law which prohibited criminals from enjoying the proceeds from their stories. Two television networks have already started work on dramas from the Gotti trial.

Things have now gone so far that the entertainment is conflicting with the course of justice. It is not inconceivable that Mr Gotti and his co-defendants could be acquitted because so many of his pursuers have signed deals. Opening the jury to remember that FBI officers involved in the case "have motives, interests and biases having to do with book contracts worth \$1 million and movie contracts worth \$625,000."

Mr Major's sticky wicket

The prime minister has chosen to launch an election campaign while the advantages are lying with the Labour party, writes Peter Riddell

John Major was distracted yesterday morning by a crisis on the other side of the world as the cabinet finished off drafting the Tory election manifesto. Sticking to his duty, he did not break off to watch television, though private secretaries brought in regular reports on England's World Cup battle. The parallels, both the difficulty of the struggle and the consolation of the final triumph, were not lost. Our cricket-loving prime minister no doubt identified with the predicament of Alec Stewart, England's temporary captain and a fellow Surrey man.

Like England yesterday, when the rain left them the underdogs with a difficult target to reach, the Tories start the election at a disadvantage. The momentum is, for the time being, with Labour, whose morale is high, though both sides were on a pre-election high in the Commons yesterday. Not only have the Tories been forced on to the defensive by the state of the economy but they have had to enter the campaign slightly behind in the polls, by two percentage points according to this morning's Mori survey in *The Times*. This is in line with other recent polls, also pointing to a hung parliament.

Moreover, the Tories also have a more demanding goal than Labour. To win, they need a clear overall majority. There is little chance of the Tories staying in office for more than a few weeks or months if they fall more than five or 10 MPs short of an overall majority. For Labour, the hurdle is lower: victory is a hung parliament even if Labour is not quite the largest party.

Such an outcome, in which the Tories would have lost 45 to 50 seats, and Labour gained a similar number, would make John Major appear the loser, as Edward Heath did after the

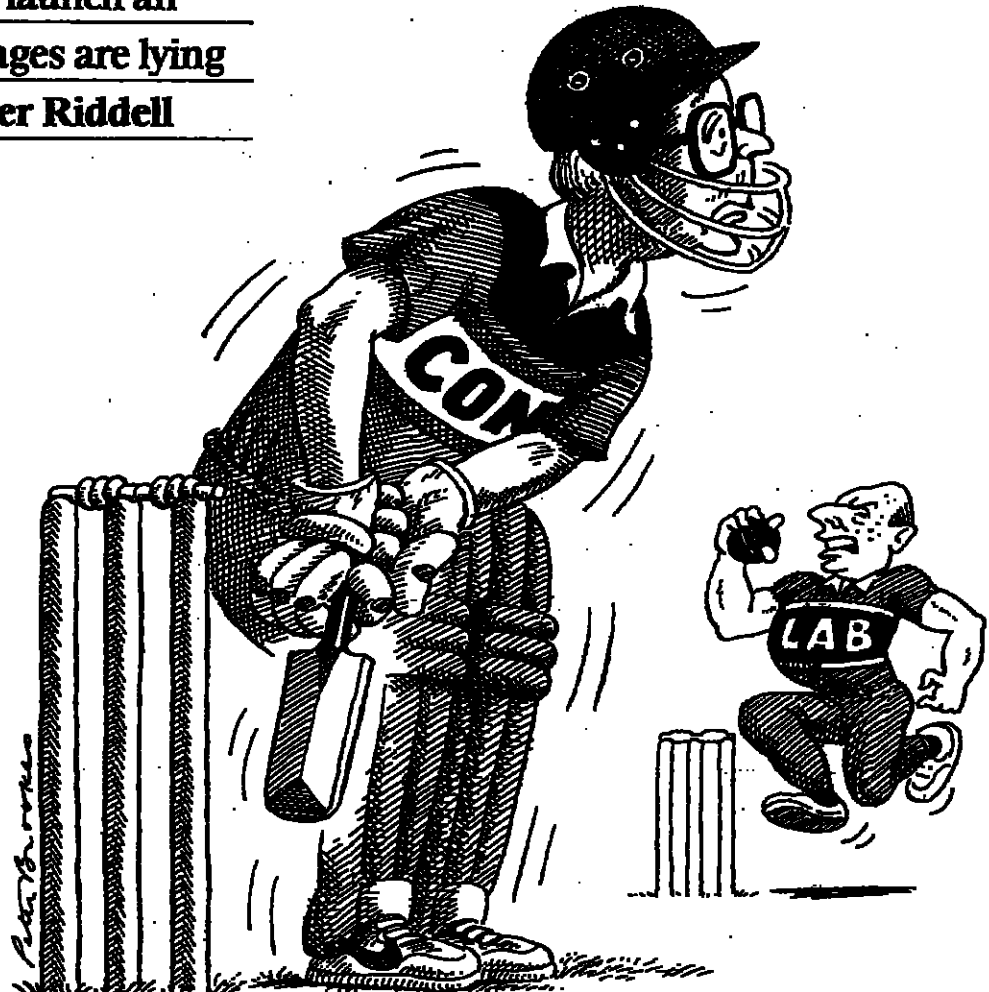


February 1974 election. The markets are right to be jittery, but no more than that at this stage. The result is wide open, though, unlike cricket, it will not turn on the heroic feats of a few stars. Even Michael Heseltine, whom we learnt this week prefers to be known as Tarzan rather than Hezza, cannot aspire to the match-winning performance yesterday of Neil Fairbrother.

Past precedents are an unreliable guide. It may be true that no government has won a fourth term since Lord Liverpool's days, that none has won starting from such a record in opinion polls, and that no Opposition since 1945 has achieved a swing in its favour of the scale Labour requires. But there is no inherent reason why the Tories or Labour cannot gain the extra two or three points above present poll ratings that they need for an overall majority.

Campaigns are, of course, largely artificial exercises, staged rituals, in which the real world seldom intrudes. The parties' various activities — and the media's focus on minor nuances and gaffes — may have little impact other than to irritate and bore. There will be few new arguments or ideas, especially when there has been such a long period of pre-campaigning. And, crises in the Middle East apart, there may be few external events to interrupt the slogans, key statistics on unemployment and prices appear next week.

Nevertheless, the results of both the 1970 and February 1974 elections — and the margins of victory in 1951, 1964 and 1983 — were probably determined by events during the



final campaign. So how can the Tories and Labour affect the result when months of battering each other have produced near level pegging?

Chris Patten said yesterday that the election would turn on matters of economic competence and leadership. That is partly code for highlighting charges against Labour as a high tax, high spending party still dominated by the unions and for stressing Mr Major's personal popularity compared with Neil Kinnock, especially now that Mrs Thatcher has

gone. Both are strong pluses for the Tories. Wavering voters already worried about their stretched finances may be scared back to the fold by the implicit Tory argument "we may have got you into this mess but we are still better than Labour at safeguarding your personal wellbeing". The Major card is the big uncertainty on which the Tories rest many of their hopes, and Mr Major, like Mr Patten, appears more relaxed, and eager for the fight, now that the decision on timing has been taken.

Such an approach may work but I doubt if it will be enough. The present Tory leadership is full of good tacticians — Mr Major himself, Richard Ryder, his chief whip — but short of proven strategies. Mr Major could not suppress a smirk over the wrongfooting of Labour when Norman Lamont announced the 20p reduced rate income tax band in Tuesday's Budget. It was a clever Westminster manoeuvre, a classic "inside the Beltway" move as Washington politicians dismissively say. But I wonder how it

will play in the country by polling day. It obviously helps to define the choice over tax, as Mr Major emphasised in the Commons yesterday, but it is not an election winner.

Labour has succeeded in sustaining its support by attacking the Tory record over the recession and standards of public services — though its unscrupulous use of individual tragedies in its NHS campaign may alienate some. John Smith has boosted the spirits of his own side by his assault on the Budget. But I doubt if "time for a change" will be enough on its own to win Labour a majority.

Both parties need to offer a more positive reason why they should be given a majority apart from just a rejection of the other side. The Tories need to show what Britain would be like in the mid-1990s and Labour has to show how it could change policy within the tight constraints of high public borrowing. A continuation of the recent bitter infighting could play to the benefit of the Liberal Democrats, though Paddy Ashdown will have to watch a tendency to sound self-righteous when his party is as ruthless in fighting elections as the other two. Nevertheless, the scale and distribution of the Liberal Democrat vote will have a crucial bearing on the result.

For the moment, my hunch is still that the Tories will, just, be the largest single party, but that they could fall short of an overall majority. The uneven spread of Labour votes works in the Tories' favour, possibly by as many as 20 MPs even if their overall support is similar, as does incumbency and the absence of students from university seats. That is why, for all their confidence, Labour leaders will have to perform above their present game to be the largest single party. The Tories will also have to perform better than they have for the past two months if they are to win a full fourth term. Mr Major should re-read his books on how Mike Brearley won his Ashes series.



...and moreover
ALAN COREN

A riveting Inspector Morse on Wednesday, I thought. Four different fireplaces. One massive job in white Carrara marble with offset slips and a double-corbelled support; a jolly little knotted pine number with oval paterae and a burnished semi-inset cowl; an elegant mahogany example of the Adam style, carved swags and husks, fluted jambs, and, as you would expect, inner mouldings of trefoil and dart; and the fourth a simple yet charming granite arch with just a gun-metal dog grate and what I am certain was a Welsh slate forecourse, although my wife remains unbudgeable from the conviction that this was in fact York stone. A woman impervious to informed screaming. I'm afraid.

You're not going to believe the next bit. Astonishingly, the mahogany item was almost identical to the mantelpiece against which Stephen Fry was leaning at the delightful party I went to last Sunday morning at Claire Rayner's Harrow premises. How about that, eh? True, I swear. Sadly, though, the house had so many fireplaces I had to give up making rough sketches after a bit. You'll understand. The head began to swim. And sadder even then that was the fact that although Stephen is the most engaging conversationalist I know, and one I run into all too rarely, I was unable to concentrate on a word he was saying because of what he was leaning on. Nor did it help that he is a large cove,

and fidgety. Kept throwing his arms about and obscuring bits of moulding.

Worse was to come. By one of those extraordinary coincidences with which mantelwatching is rife, when Stephen opened up again that night in BBC's *Common Pursuit* I was unable to pay any attention to what he was saying this time, either. Or, indeed, to what anyone else was, for the play not only had several serious fireplaces in it, it had one so utterly right that I had to go and lie down. That night, I hardly slept. Monday wasn't too bad. I worked all day, thereby running into no fireplaces at all, and we didn't watch the box that night. We went to see Steve Ross at Pizza on the Park, which doesn't have fireplaces, so I could listen to Steve's straining act, and I was doing fine until the interval, when I fancied a cigar but they didn't have one, so I went next door to the new Lanesborough Hotel, and that was it. They've put a fireplace in the foyer you wouldn't believe. By the time I'd finished examining it and got back, Steve was half way through his second set. My wife said: "Where's the cigar?" and I said: "What cigar?"

I've suddenly realised you may not know what this is all about. You may just have forgotten my telling you on February 5 that I had the men in. Certainly, you do not know that the men have reached the point where they need to put the fireplace in. They want me to choose one. They have been wanting me to

choose one for a fortnight. I have therefore been choosing one for a fortnight. I have read all the fireplace books there are. I have been to all the fireplace shops there are, and I tell you it is not easy going into places called *Great Expectations* and *Feeling Grate* and *Burning Sensations* and *Old Flames*, but you have to.

After that you start looking at every fireplace in every house you go to, and when that is not enough to bring you to a decision you start looking at every fireplace in every house you do not go to, i.e. in films, on television, at the theatre, but no ballet, unless of course it's *Nutcracker*.

And does all this help you come to a decision? I'll tell you what all this helps you come to. Do you remember when the great Bobby Fischer gave up competitive chess? He said he knew it was time when he found it impossible to walk up Park Avenue without seeing chess moves in all the paving squares. What happened to him after that, or where they might have put him, I do not know, but I may be in a position to tell you any day now. If they do put me in the same place as Bobby, we may very well play a game or two. I cannot claim to be a grandmaster, but if he gives me one of those little horses and a couple of towers, he shall find himself with a run for his money.

Provided I can concentrate. If Bobby's room has a fireplace, I may well have problems.

A swing to Norma

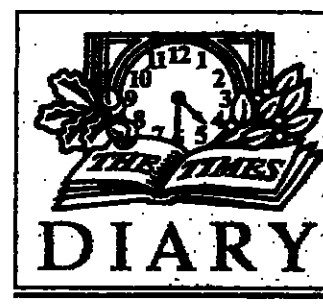
GONE are the days when politicians' wives stayed home and minded the constituency during an election. Both Norma Major and Glenys Kinnock will be pushed into the spotlight over the next month by party strategists who believe that in an election likely to be a close run thing as much as substance, the feminine touch could prove vital.

That former shrinking violet, the prime minister's wife, who made no secret of her dread of publicity when her husband got to Downing Street, will become the first consort of a Tory leader to conduct her own presidential-style election campaign. Tory planners have arranged an energetic separate programme for her, involving travel all over the country by train, car and helicopter. Her tour starts in St James's Park on Monday when she will go kite-flying with Roy Hudd in aid of spina bifida research — not to mention the Tory cause.

"Mrs Major shares the views of the prime minister and will let him do the political talking. But she will also have plenty to say and do herself," says an aide. She will be accompanied throughout by Vanessa Ford, a Central Office press officer, and Maggie Scott, Norma's best friend for the past 16 years. Scott will act as unofficial lady-in-waiting, sending changes of wardrobe to the cleaners and providing a friendly face when the going gets tough.

Glenys Kinnock will repeat the high-profile personal tour she pioneered at the last election. She will be accompanied by Nita Clarke, former press officer to Ken Livingstone at the Greater London Council.

Only Jane Ashdown is adhering



to the traditional concept of a leader's wife. She has refused to be filmed alongside Glenys and Norma for a series of profiles of the wives on BBC breakfast television and will seldom leave her Yeovil home. "Paddy is the one up for election, not me," she has told the Liberal Democrat leader's staff.

● No one with horse sense is betting on the outcome of the election, least of all those cautious folk, the opinion pollsters. But Bob Worcester of Mori has already made £50 bet at 10-1 on an April 9 poll last October.

Waite's blow-out

TERRY WAITE fulfilled a longstanding promise to his fellow hostage John McCarthy yesterday when he treated him to lunch at his favourite restaurant. After receiving their CBE insignia at Buckingham Palace, Waite took McCarthy, Jill Morrell, McCarthy's father and other relatives to L'Amico, the Italian restaurant in Westminster where Neil Kinnock once entertained Mikhail Gorbachev.

During their captivity Waite had pledged to McCarthy and Brian Keenan that when they were free he would treat them to a pasta meal at the restaurant. Sadly,

Keenan did not feel up to joining yesterday's reunion.

Waite, relaxing at the bar before lunch, told the *Diary*: "It was hard to believe when I was sitting there manacled to my cell floor that I used to eat and drink here. It was one of the thoughts of home that kept me going. L'Amico has always been my favourite and Bruno Carini, the owner, has been a friend for 14 years."

There was further poignancy to yesterday's visit. Just over five years ago Waite had taken McCarthy's father, Pat, there before Waite's own ill-fated mission. "We came here to discuss how we could get John freed. It's nice to be here together again."

● After 60 years of male dominance the BBC World Service could get its first woman director with the forthcoming exit, announced yesterday, of John Tusa. The early favourites include Jenny Abramsky, head of radio news and current affairs, and Jane Drabble, a senior television executive who began her career at Bush House. Abramsky in particular is a close ally of John Birt, with whom Tusa never saw eye to eye. However, if Birt decides the service requires a more flamboyant, high-profile figure he could approach John Simpson or Peter Jay, both of whom have a wealth of overseas experience.

Mac the composer

MALCOLM MCLAREN, he of the Sex Pistols notoriety, is planning an opera while boasting he has never sat through an entire performance in his life. "I've been to the Met in New York several times but I never lasted very long. It took too much time to get to the big hits." Nevertheless, McLaren is hooked. "It's the anarchy and angst of it. Opera is love and death

in a pint bottle. I hate Tin Pan Alley pop. This is the devil's music. Puccini and Verdi were early rock 'n' rollers."

McLaren, taking part in English National Opera's new programme to capture a bigger youth

It's Verdi's Requiem

Way out!



audience, will spend the summer composing with a group of young musicians. Whether the fruits of their labour will ever be performed at the Coliseum remains to be seen.

● South Africa, no stranger to censorship, is bemused by the latest outbreak. The state radio station has been instructed that in the interests of impartiality songs prominently featuring the word "no" are banned in the run-up to next Tuesday's referendum. Not for the first time the Rolling Stones song Satisfaction (I Can't Get No) is outlawed, along with Bob Marley's No Woman No Cry and a host of classics such as Edith Piaf's Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien. The status of The Beatles' Hello Goodbye ("You say yes, I say no") is said to be causing considerable debate in government circles.



LEVERING FOR PEACE

The killings on the hills of Nagorno-Karabakh are an obscenity. So too are the indiscriminate revenge attacks on both sides, cities and isolated settlements. Neither Armenians nor Azeris can monopolise the world's sympathy and political support. Both peoples are victims. But atrocities have been committed by gunmen on both sides.

Humanity demands an end to the bloodshed. The post-communist order is creaking as long as two members of the Council on Security and Co-operation in Europe engage in all-out warfare. The regional balance is threatened with potentially destabilising consequences for Russia, Central Asia and the Middle East. Even if the prospect of success is not high, the world must now use its limited leverage for peace.

Fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh has now been going on for almost four years. But the dispute is one of those, like Lebanon, which seems intractable, localised and only marginal to the interests of the big powers. None the less, with the recent escalation, at least five peace initiatives are now underway: Russian, Iranian, Turkish, a CSCE mission and backstage efforts at the Nato Co-operation Council earlier this week. Even Douglas Hogg, the foreign office minister, is now shuttling between Baku and Yerevan.

All these schemes propose some kind of neutral status for the enclave that would allow the villagers to co-exist, with outside guarantees acceptable to both sides. Given the deep-seated sense of grievance in both communities, proposals based on compromise may appear futile. The alternative is a wholesale transfer of population, with the Armenians moving out of Nagorno-Karabakh and the Azeris out of Nakhichevan, the Azerbaijani enclave between Armenia and Turkey. Turkey has suggested a double corridor solution: a demilitarised zone giving Armenians free access to Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijanis to Nakhichevan. But who would protect the corridors?

The United Nations has too much on its hands. A European peacekeeping force to protect some 180,000 villagers would be enormously expensive. The terrain is hostile, the boundaries unclear, the population suspicious. Any such force could go in only after a political settlement between Yerevan and Baku. But neither the Armenian nor Azerbaijani leadership can do much. Public opinion is enraged and wants war. Thousands of refugees are insisting on the right to return. The governments themselves have little control over the guerrillas.

Should the world then simply let the two sides fight it out, in mutual exhaustion, the readiness to compromise is forced upon them? Such conflict of despair is morally wrong and strategically dangerous. The conflict has dragged Turkey more and more into the vortex. Ankara is poised to play a vital role encouraging secular democracy in Central Asia. Turkish opinion, suspicious of the Armenians and their powerful diaspora, is siding with Azerbaijan and may force the government away from its even-handedness. The Armenians could then point to a new Turkish-backed genocide, the war could become a Christian-Muslim conflict with the West tempted to side with Armenia, and latent Turkish resentment of Western European attitudes might whip up a nationalism dangerous to Nato and to regional stability.

The West must therefore use its leverage in Nato and CSCE to force the two sides to begin talks. The most these can aim for at first is a return of prisoners and hostages and agreement to try to control the militias. An overall settlement may come later. The Russians, angered at the recent attacks on their bases, can be persuaded to stand firm and use their economic leverage. They have the experience, local knowledge and men on the ground. Though neither Yerevan nor Baku trusts Moscow, Western Europe must give it full support and warn the combatants that they cannot look to the West for aid while continuing their mutual slaughter.

PRIDE AND PRIVILEGE

Over the years the House of Commons has become less pompous in defence of its pomp and privileges. In the 1950s, John Juvon was arraigned at the bar of the House for casting aspersions on how MPs used their petrol allowances during the Suez crisis. By 1986, voters councils prevailed when the Commons voted down a select committee recommendation of stern action against Richard Evans of this newspaper for publishing details of a forthcoming committee report.

Yesterday, the Commons social security select committee published its response to a different kind of challenge to its pride and prerogatives. The Maxwell brothers, Kevin and Ian, had refused to answer questions during the committee's investigation into alleged fraud in the Maxwell pension funds. As tales of the fate of the pensioners emerge, the Maxwell brothers may not attract much sympathy. Many might have enjoyed watching their rough treatment by the committee, the more so since its proceedings, unlike those of the courts, can be televised. Never mind. In Britain everyone is presumed innocent until proved guilty in a court of law. In Britain the right to silence is widely regarded as a basic protection of that presumption of innocence.

However, these are natural rather than legal rights. There is nothing in law to stop Parliament putting its own prerogatives ahead of them. Yesterday's report from the committee is intended to address the question whether, having the power to demand the Maxwell's appearance, it should insist on it. The result is the dampest of damp squibs, and the issue is ducked.

The committee is defensive about its efforts to question the Maxwells. To have undertaken an enquiry, but to have ignored the Maxwell brothers, seemed to us the equivalent of suggesting to Shakespeare that he was mistaken to have included the Prince in Hamlet. But nobody suggests that the

existence of the Maxwell brothers should have been ignored: merely that the preparation of the report did not require them to be interviewed. Indeed, the committee has itself proved as much. Despite the Maxwell's refusal to co-operate, it produced a well-argued report on Monday on reform of the pension law. That, not the punishment of alleged malfeasance, is the proper role of a select committee of Parliament.

Yesterday's report suggests another motive for committee members' eagerness to pursue the brothers: the hope that a spot of unfinished business might help them back to their seats after the election. They had been prevented by lack of time from completing their enquiries, the report said, but all the members of the current committee are standing for re-election and are committed after the election to pursuing the issues raised in the report.

The committee must be aware that it has backed itself into a corner. To urge tough action against the Maxwells would attract further opprobrium from those who criticised the committee for the manner of its interrogation of the brothers in the first place. Not to take action might be taken as conceding that the committee had overstepped the mark, without the backing of the whole House. So the committee concluded that it had to be "a matter for our successor committee" to decide whether to bring the Maxwells before the House, and then "find an appropriate time to consider the question of... prime facie contempt of the House".

"In political activity," the committee portentously remarks, "the question of timing is often as important as the subject itself." On this occasion, the question of timing simply means that the committee has an opportunity to save face by refusing to climb down before the election. And once the new Parliament is in place, the whole matter should be quietly dropped.

THE DARLING FACTOR

Sir Ralph Richardson once said that "the art of acting consists in keeping people from coughing". His colleagues are now turning that art into the herding of people into polling booths. Neil Kinnock turned up yesterday with several "dear friends" at a "celebrity" press conference. Could the endorsement of Anthony Sher, Colin Welland and Harriet Walter really help him to win the election?

Across the Atlantic, celebrity-endorsement is nothing new. Robert Redford, Warren Beatty and Jane Fonda support the Democrats, while George Bush recently wheeled on Arnold Schwarzenegger in New Hampshire to "terminate" Patrick Buchanan. It did not work: with the resilience of one of Mr Schwarzenegger's robot characters Mr Buchanan bounced back from every punch. Until a few decades ago, the British were too haughty about their politics to resort to this technique. Why should someone who is good at television sit-com, or even at playing Hamlet, know anything about politics? But once famous people showed their pulling power, in advertisements from soap powder to car tyres, the political marketing men realised how powerful they could be.

Most people dislike politicians. But many of them respect — sometimes even idolise — actors, sportsmen and pop stars. If their idol is prepared to vote Labour or Conservative, the naive theory goes, that group of politicians might not be so bad after all. For the depoliticised (and America has many more of them than Britain), the argument may hold, though it may not motivate people sufficiently to get them out on the day. Once one party starts using celebrities, others follow suit. Celebrity war breaks out.

Labour has Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie, Lenny Henry, Sir Richard Attenborough, Prunella Scales and Steve Cram. The Conservatives will fight back with Frank Bruno, Anthony Andrews, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Bill Wyman, Mike Gating and Graham Gooch. The Liberal Democrats, trying to stand above the fray, will rely on the celebrity of Paddy Ashdown alone.

In due course, however, the posers of famous people supporting the two sides may cancel each other out. A few actors will get their pictures in the papers, but not much harm will have been done to the political process except to its dignity. The effect of endorsement will never be as strong in Britain as it is in America because, however much the pundits complain, politics here is more about policy than personality. Americans are voting for a head of state as well as a prime minister, and a head of state has to try to embody personal qualities that will make Americans feel good about being American. The Queen does that already for Britons. Prime ministers merely run the country.

Nor is Britain likely to be overrun with actors or sportsmen turned politicians. With the odd exception — Glenda Jackson, Sebastian Coe — skill in one is rarely seen as a qualification for the other. In countries such as Ireland, where voters are presented with a huge list of candidates at elections, it pays for parties to sport famous people: their names stand out on the ballot paper. And in America, the fame won by an actor is easily transferred to the hustings. In Britain, actors are free to enter politics, just as farmers or bankers or miners are. But to pull the votes, they have to be good politicians. A famous face is not enough.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Primrose path or harmless flutter?

From the Chairman of the National Council on Gambling

Sir, Until now, British governments, of all political persuasions, have always accepted that gambling should operate within the limits of unstimulated demand. A national lottery of the type proposed in the white paper (current and leading article, March 7) inevitably implies that it is now the intention to encourage people to gamble by attracting as many participants to subscribe as much as possible.

The bookmaking interests have already indicated that the introduction of a national lottery would be regarded by them as an indication that the government had abandoned its policy of not encouraging betting and that the industry would then seek a lifting of the current restrictions on betting offices. This would be wholly undesirable in view of the inevitably increased incidence of excessive gambling and the disturbance to individuals, their families and society that results from this.

Furthermore, the establishment of a national lottery implies public acceptance of the idea that the arts, sport, heritage and other charitable purposes are lower division activities which can never look to securing adequate finance from central and local public funds, or from individual and collective private charity, and must seek help through inciting people to gamble.

These developments are particularly deplorable since this country already has more opportunities to gamble than most other places. Yours faithfully, E. MORAN, Chairman, The National Council on Gambling, 26 Bedford Square, W1.

From the Reverend Dr Kenneth G. Greet

Sir, The proposal to introduce a state lottery is an appeal not to the fine instinct to support charitable causes, but to that acquisitiveness in all of us which, in fact, undermines true generosity. The home secretary's assertion that the lottery would provide the chance of a "harmless flutter" shows a lack of awareness of the insidious effects of gambling on some members of the community and a disregard of the dubious history of state lotteries. The verdict of an eminent Victorian statesman that gambling was "a vast engine of demoralisation" is only one of a chorus of caveats.

When the lawmakers act without informed consideration of the moral implications of their actions, the results can only be detrimental to the best interests of the community. This perverse proposal should not be allowed to reach the statute book.

Yours sincerely, KENNETH GREET, Redcroft, 89 Broadmark Lane, Rustington, West Sussex.

From Mrs R. J. Pratt

Sir, Since the permutations of the pools coupons have always baffled me, I look forward to a simple flutter on a "good causes" national lottery. Face Mr Roy Hattersley, this does not mean that I shall forsake the claims of the local hospice or church fund. I just want a little fun.

Yours sincerely, HARRIET PRATT, Sheepcotes, Chigwell Row, Essex.

From Dr P. G. Sayer

Sir, The introduction of a national lottery? But we already have fine examples in education and the NHS.

Yours faithfully, PHILIP G. SAYER, 23 Blacklands Place, Lenzie, Glasgow.

From Mr John K. Winger

Sir, How long will it be before the nationalised lottery is privatised?

Yours sincerely, JOHN K. WINGER, 25 Conway Crescent, Perivale, Greenford, Middlesex.

Dirty elections

From Mr B. S. Hyman

Sir, In view of claims that this is going to be one of the dirtiest elections of all time, it is worth recording that in the first edition of *Punch*, dated July 17, 1841, there was a table headed "A synopsis of voting, arranged according to the categories of 'cant'".

There was also a poem, called "A Commentary on the Elections", the last two lines of which read: "So if there's no election I should like to find out what all the quibbling and fibbing, placarding and blagging, losing and winning, bearing and giving and every other cetera has been about."

Yours faithfully, B. S. HYMAN, 4 Priory View, Bushey Heath, Hertsfordshire.

From Mr Lawrence James

Sir, Could any politician explain the difference between 18th-century parliamentary candidates who showed voters with brandy, beer and roast beef and today's who broadcast promises of tax reductions and all sorts of future benefits in cash and kind? The only one that I can think of is that the former spent their own money and the latter ours.

Yours faithfully, LAWRENCE JAMES, St Leonard's House, South Street, St Andrews, Fife.

Why engineers deserve support

From Mr Kenneth Warren, MP for Hastings and Rye (Conservative)

Sir, Your criticism (leading article, March 9) of the general calibre of UK engineers is a propaganda gift to our foreign competitors who will ensure that the customers we are trying to capture read the bad news.

Engineering qualifications are a display of competence and not the concoction which you ridicule as "alphabet soup". To obtain mine (CEng) I spent years working through an apprenticeship on the factory floor, at evening classes and university. My experience is common.

Project cost over-runs are the exception, rather than the rule you imply. When our engineers are given the requisite authority and resources required to deliver on time, on cost and at the specified quality they are world-beaters. Boards festooned with accountants, lawyers and ad men are not able to design, produce and sell.

As chairman of the Select Committee on Trade and Industry leading a group which returned today from a review of export opportunities in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan I can assure you that new markets there are wide open for UK equipment for power generation, air and ground transportation, public utilities and quality assurance of the environment.

I wish Sir John Fairclough well in his task of establishing a central bureaucracy for engineers. However, I trust our scarce engineering resources will not be wasted in committees when the best export market opportunities today are engineering-led and are crying out for British bidders.

Yours faithfully, KENNETH WARREN, House of Commons, March 11.

From the Chairman of the Engineering Council

Sir, A new and refreshing perception of the work of professional engineers has emerged from a recent independent study in some secondary schools. This contrasts starkly with the "perceived class bias" to which you refer in your leading article (March 9), that engineers "work with grubby hands".

The signs of this emerging attitude came from an evaluation in a number of schools operating our neighbourhood engineers' scheme — in which professional engineers and teachers work together to present a career in engineering in a positive and constructive way. The general opinion from the young people is that the engineer is a skilled pro-

fessional, someone who is often in charge of major projects and who takes key decisions.

In addition to references to "designing and producing", building oil rigs and building the Channel tunnel, one youngster summed up: "Engineers are like doctors, lawyers and accountants." Two other responses were: "There is glamour in being an engineer. You have a lot of freedom. You invent things. You try out new ideas" and "I fancy the travelling, designing and building machinery, and using computers to help you design."

The composite picture of an engineer from the pupils at an all-girls school is of "someone who designs and makes things... people who actually work... do something creative... design things on computers". It comes as a pleasant surprise to read how some young people see engineers. Another good omen for tomorrow.

Yours faithfully, JOHN FAIRCLOUGH, Chairman, The Engineering Council, 10 Maitland Street, WC2, March 10.

From Eur Ing R. Sabry-Grant

Sir, The importance of the engineer to society has been recognised for generations on the Continent, where the Diplôme Ingénieur is state-conferred in many countries. In Germany, for instance, the resulting title, Ingenieur, and its higher academic derivatives (e.g. Dr Ingenieur) become legally a part of the titleholder's name and are used naturally at work and in the community. In this country, the title of Eur Ing (European Engineer), when conferred upon suitably qualified engineers, brings Britain into line with mainland practice.

The engineering profession is seeking to put its own house in order in a hostile environment. It has long since earned a status and rewards comparable to those afforded to other professions in Britain (as you commented in a leading article on November 5, 1991). The continental practice of conferring and reserving a title that indicates formal professional preparation deserves serious consideration as an encouraging interim sign of good will from the community that this profession serves.

I am, etc., RALPH SABRY-GRANT, 32 Grange Gardens, Pinner, Middlesex, March 10.

has resurrected the old-style blue flag that the EC now considers to be too easy to achieve, calling it the Seaside Award.

This new award will not signify excellent water quality — it can be awarded to those beaches with bathing waters only achieving a pass of the minimum standards required by European law.

The fact that this new Seaside Award will also be represented by a blue flag at the winning beaches is further evidence that the scheme is designed to con the public into believing beaches have excellent water quality and deserve a special award, when the water may simply be achieving a borderline pass of the minimum standards laid down by the EC in 1976.

Yours sincerely, GUY LINLEY-ADAMS, GINA ROZNER, Marine Conservation Society, 9 Gloucester Road, Ross-on-Wye, Hereford and Worcester, March 5.

Council tax valuations

From Mr James R. B. Liell

Sir, Your local government correspondent ("Estate agents taken to task over faulty tax valuations", report, February 24) reveals that a surprisingly large number of errors have arisen in the preparation of council tax valuations by estate agents — in some cases more than 50 per cent of the batches recently checked by the District Valuer's Department of the Inland Revenue have been "failed".

As a chartered surveyor who decided not to bid for any of this work, I am intrigued by these revelations and I have been trying to work out how such a large proportion of valuations could have been "wrong". I have come to two conclusions:

1. The valuer has to put a property within a band — usually below £40,000; £40,000-£80,000; £80,000-£120,000 — and so on, and presum-

Twining in cattle

From Mr Philip Paxman

Sir, Your letters (March 3) on embryo transfer and twinning in dairy cattle raised the important issue of animal welfare, of which this association is wholly mindful. In England the principal method of embryo distribution and transfer is through specialist veterinary cattle practices. The veterinary surgeon, having responsibility for the health and welfare of the herd, is the person best placed to judge the type and number of embryos to be transferred, and to give guidance in relation to husbandry and welfare measures.

Twinning in cattle, as in sheep, does occur spontaneously. It is not many years since twinning in upland sheep was regarded as undesirable, but following improvements in hus-

bandry, nutrition, pregnancy diagnosis and housing it is now the norm. New technology must be ethically managed, not prohibited.

Improvement in product quality, however, not quantity, is the main prize of the new breeding methods. Seventy per cent of European beef is of dairy herd origins, which explains why the great majority of it falls short of reasonable consumer standards. Now it is possible for every farmer to meet market demands by supplying beef of the very best quality from every dairy cow.

Yours faithfully, PHILIP PAXMAN (Chairman, European Trade Association for Advanced Animal Breeding), Animal Research Station, University of Cambridge, 307 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, March 5.

Threat to Sofia newspaper

From Mr Stefan Prodev

Sir, The survival of the most widely read Bulgarian daily newspaper, *Duma*, is at stake. Drawing upon repressive legislation recently enacted by parliament, the minister of finance has drafted an order for the confiscation of the *Duma* publishing house together with all its publications.

This would be a devastating blow against freedom of expression in Bulgaria and would amount to a major reversal for the still all-too-fragile democratic process in the country.

Duma today is indisputably the major opposition daily in Bulgaria and a considerable commercial success. It has a total print of some 260,000 to 300,000 copies and for the past two years it has enjoyed the largest number of regular subscribers — 128,000.

It was launched in April 1990 to express the point of view of democratic socialism in present-day Bulgaria. It has enjoyed full editorial independence and thus has gained acceptance among broad sectors of the reading public well beyond socialist circles. A growing number of non-socialist authors have chosen to publish their comments in *Duma* because of the increasing lack of non-governmental publications.

The banning of *Duma* would amount to a grave breach of both the Constitution and the laws on political activity, enacted during the past two years.

The government has attempted to seek a legal basis for its action from a law passed by the present parliament, which allows the confiscation of the property of political parties and public organisations considered to have been part of the old system.

In the case of *Duma*, its only previous relationship with the Bulgarian socialist party was the transfer of property from a former newspaper run by the socialist party.

The executive order for its confiscation, if applied, would lead to the ridiculous situation where the government would become the publisher of the main opposition daily and the rest of the *Duma* publications. Furthermore, the government would thereby appropriate all the funds and resources that we have managed to save.

With sincere best regards, STEFAN PRODEV (Editor-in-Chief),

Duma, Tsarigradsko Chaussee 47, Sofia 1000, Bulgaria, March 9.

Plea from Sverdlovsk

From Mr Ansel Harris

Sir, Mrs Likhoda's *cri de coeur* from Sverdlovsk (letter, March 9), calling for advice on how to set up her business enterprise, has an authentic ring.

Last year, on a mission to Hungary sponsored by the Know-How Fund, this partnership took part in a number of seminars and consultations for potential new business people in Budapest, Szeged and Pecs. In each of these cities we found an almost total ignorance of the mechanisms and demands of the market economy among former managers and aspiring entrepreneurs, and an equal innocence of its ethos, criteria and *modus operandi*.

In the light of this experience we recommended to the Know-How Fund that at least a part of its nugatory funds should be applied to the writing, production and dissemination of open and distance learning packages, imparting basic business skills and methods. It seemed to us that the British Council, already in situ in a number of the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe, was ideally placed to service such a programme, and that a businessman/woman should be specially seconded to the council for this purpose.

Sadly, our recommendations fell on deaf ears. I trust that the same will not apply to Mrs Likhoda's eloquent plea.

Yours faithfully, ANSEL HARRIS, MBA Partners, 23 Ferncroft Avenue, NW3, March 9.

Wrong sort of numbers

From Mr T. S. Preston

Sir, British Rail is grateful to *The Times* Diary (March 12) for drawing its attention to the fact that some of the 1.5 million copies of its passenger's charter were delivered on time but with the pages in the wrong order.

Under the terms of the "printer's charter", we shall be asking our supplier for an immediate cash refund.

Yours sincerely, SYDNEY PRESTON (Director, Information Services), British Railways Board, Euston House, 24 Eversholt Street, PO Box 100, London NW1 1DZ, March 12.

Business letter, page 25

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

OBITUARIES

RICHARD BROOKS

Richard Brooks, American screenwriter and film director, and author of *The Producer*, one of the most incisive novels about Hollywood, died of heart failure on March 11, aged 79. He was born in Philadelphia on May 18, 1912.

WITH his crew cut grey hair, craggy features and a pipe generally in the corner of the mouth, Richard Brooks fitted very well the popular image of an old style Hollywood film director. The gruff manner, supplemented by the occasional verbal explosion, helped too. And Brooks was a Hollywood man through and through, establishing his career at a time when the studio system still ruled. He understood how the place worked and made sure that it allowed him to direct films which included *The Blackboard Jungle*, *Lord Jim*, *Elmer Gantry* and *Looking for Mr Goodbar*.

In common with many other film directors Richard Brooks began his Hollywood career as a script writer. He arrived with a reasonable track record as a journalist, specialising in sports reporting, after graduating from the Temple University School of Journalism in Philadelphia. He had also published a novel, *The Brick Foxhole*, written while he was serving in the US Marines. This was later bought by RKO and under the title *Crossfire*, atmospherically directed by Edward Dmytryk, became one of the best of the postwar American thrillers as well as being a sharp indictment of anti-semitism.

Brooks's own scripts, which started after he had left the marines, were rather less distinguished at the beginning. *Cobra Woman* (1944), a farago with Maria Montez, Jon Hall and Sabu, had some fairly risible lines, which might not have been of Brooks's making. Happily he moved on to classic material, co-writing Robert Siodmak's *The Killers* and doing the same with the director John Huston for *Key Largo*. Both films won acclaim for their economy and tension.

The first film he directed himself was *Criss* (1950), based on a George Tabori story, for MGM with Cary Grant, a sombre thriller carrying much of the mood of those earlier films. *Deadline USA* (1952) reunited him with Humphrey Bogart, who had starred in *Key Largo*, this time playing a crusading newspaperman. But it was *The Blackboard Jungle* (1955) which really brought Brooks to the attention of the cinema-going public. The story of a teacher (Glenn Ford) who



Richard Brooks and a scene from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* with Paul Newman and Elizabeth Taylor

gradually garners the respect of a classroom of slum kids made its mark as a piece of Fifties social realism, although it looks fairly sentimental today. But it also had, as the credits unrolled, a number called "Rock Around the Clock" played by a group named Bill Haley and the Comets.

Brooks later confessed himself surprised by the success of *Jungle*, which had begun as a tale of idealism based on the Evan Hunter novel. The reviews were not all that favourable, but the public queued at the box-office. And no-one could deny that Brooks helped spawn the whole rock 'n' roll movement.

Thereafter he turned to more literary subjects, regularly leaving the present. *The Brothers Karamazov* (1958) was long and star-studded, with Yul Brynner, Maria Schell and Richard Basehart. No-one could complain about lack of fidelity to Dostoevsky in the script, which Brooks provided himself. But it did not spark the imagination. By the time of *Lord Jim* (1964) he was in a sufficiently powerful position to act as his own producer. It, too, was long but attracted a lot of publicity because of its cost and its far eastern location scenes. *Jim* was chosen for the Royal Film performance of 1965. Despite the presence of Peter O'Toole and James Mason in the cast it was also reckoned a rather



heavy affair. The cynics began to say that Richard Brooks himself had become the victim of the Hollywood which he had analysed so profoundly in his novel, *The Producer*, published in 1952.

This ignores his success in transferring two Tennessee Williams plays to the screen: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Sweet Bird of Youth*. He sanitised the scripts a little, judging that what was acceptable in the theatre might not be so on the screen — scarcely a concern which applies nowadays. But under his direction Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman gave powerful performances in *Cat*, as did Newman in *Bird*. The screenplay of *Elmer Gantry* (1960), based on the Sinclair Lewis novel of a

small-town evangelist, won Richard Brooks an Oscar. In it he directed Jean Simmons whom he married shortly after filming had finished, when her divorce from Stewart Granger came through. The marriage was dissolved 17 years later.

Gantry, with strong performances from Burt Lancaster and Shirley Jones and a score by André Previn, still stands up well and could be considered Brooks's best film. Its shortcomings, in common with *Lord Jim* and *Karamazov*, is excessive length. *In Cold Blood* (1967), based on Truman Capote's piece of reportage of a family murdered by itinerant gunmen, brought him notoriety for the brutality of both the subject and its treatment: no qualms now,

as there had been with Tennessee Williams, in spelling everything out. Nor did Brooks feel many constraints in *Looking for Mr Goodbar* (1977), with Diane Keaton as a teacher of deaf children who turns into a less saintly person when she cruises the Manhattan singles bars by night. When it was unwisely scheduled for BBC TV in the Christmas of 1984 it was hastily dropped even after cuts had been made.

Richard Brooks regularly worked with Hollywood's biggest stars and quite often he got the best out of them. His cinematic principle was that if you can write it then you can direct it. That was what he put into practice.

WILLIAM ARROWSMITH

William Ayres Arrowsmith, educationist, died in Brookline, Massachusetts, on February 20 aged 67. He was born in Orange, New Jersey, on April 13, 1924.

AS A passionate believer in the humanities and the need to move to modern life, William Arrowsmith was an outspoken critic of what he called "the hideous jungle of academic bureaucracy" for sacrificing graduate education to trivial research, "the cult of the fact", and career training. His most noted outburst came in 1966 when, as keynote speaker at a conference of the American Council on Education, he accused educators of creating "a vacuum of leadership". His audience of 1,400, composed of very university presidents, deans and trustees, he was attacking, stood and applauded.

It was a time of ferment on American campuses: the era of Vietnam and battles over civil rights. Arrowsmith called for the creation of "uni-

versities of the public interest", designed to develop a moral compass to address social issues, and returned to this theme in 1984 when he served on a panel for the National Endowment for the Humanities which endorsed similar proposals.

As a scholar, Arrowsmith was best known as a translator, both of the classics and of modern works. Among the classics he translated into English were dramas by Euripides and Aristophanes, and he was editor of the 33-volume *The Greek Tragedy in New Translations*, published by Oxford University Press in 1973. More recently, he edited Nietzsche's *Unmodern Observations* in 1989. He was also founding editor of *The Hudson Review*, *The Chicago Review*, and *Arion*, and an editor of *Dallas*, *Mosaic*, *American Poetry Review*, and *Pegoud*.

Arrowsmith, who was a Rhodes scholar, received Guggenheim, Wilson, and Rockefeller fellowships, and took bachelor's and master's degrees at Oxford.

REAR-ADMIRAL KENNETH WESTON

Rear-Admiral William Kenneth Weston, CB, OBE, who was chief engineering officer on the staff of the commander-in-chief Plymouth, 1954-58, died on March 10, aged 87. He was born on November 8, 1904.

KENNETH Weston was closely involved in marine engineering development after the last world war. In the late 1940s he helped found the naval wing of the National Gas Turbine Establishment at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, which led research into a new generation of engines for British warships.

From there he went to Manchester as the Admiralty's district engineer overseas for the northwest (including Northern Ireland) where he became associated with, among other things, production of the new triangular Deltic engine for fleet minesweepers (a design which, interestingly, had its origins in a German aircraft diesel engine of impressive power/weight ratio, which had fallen into allied hands in the last days of the war; it also enjoyed a very successful career with British Railways, powering a famous generation of diesel locomotives). He also took part, during his final appointment as a rear admiral at Plymouth, in early discussions over the adoption of planned maintenance, though the system of programmed refits and replacement of spare parts for ships was not introduced until after his time.



Weston was born at Redhill, Surrey, into a family which had made its money from salt mines. But his father, a city businessman, died when he was less than a year old and he was sent as a boy to the Royal Naval College, Osborne, thence to Dartmouth and, finally, to the old engineering college at Keyham, Devonport.

After a succession of postings on shore and at sea during the 1920s and 1930s,

he found himself serving in the Mediterranean at the outbreak of the second world war. He returned in 1939, however, to spend much of the war in the engineers' department at Bath. From there he was posted to the staff of the flag officer destroyers in the Pacific and spent the last twelve months of the war as fleet engineer officer in the depot ship HMS *Tyne*, supporting frigates and destroyers in the fight against Japan.

In 1946 he went with the fleet to Hong Kong where part of his job was to help get the local railways running again, returning to this country towards the end of the same year. He was appointed OBE in 1945 and created CB in 1956.

After retiring from the navy in 1958 Kenneth Weston was for many years a member of the Court of Assistants of the Worshipful Company of Salters (to which his family had belonged since the start of the last century), serving as master in 1963. He also became chairman of his local branch of the British Legion and treasurer of the parochial church council.

In later years, however, he derived most pleasure from a developing interest in alpine flora. He and his wife spent all their holidays, armed with a camera, photographing plants on the lower slopes of Europe's mountain ranges.

Admiral Weston is survived by his wife, Mollie, whom he married in 1934, and by their son and two daughters.

Luncheons

Royal Society and Foundation for Science and Technology Sir Michael Anyah, President of the Royal Society, and Dr Butlerworth, Chairman of the Foundation for Science and Technology, presided at a discussion luncheon held yesterday at the Royal Society. Dr Allan Bromley, Science Adviser to the American President, also spoke. Among other present were:

The Earl of Harewood, Lord Joffe, Lord Adrian, Lord Kelvin, Baroness Blackmore, Baroness Hargrave, Lord Butlerworth, Lord Butterworth, Lord Marshall, Lord Cleeve, Lord Chorley, Lord Dalton, Lord Harewood, Lord Fraser of Kilmorack, Baroness Hooper, Lord Hume of Newton, Lord Hume of Rothes, Lord Hume of Solihull, Lord Hume of Winton, Baroness Platt of Wiltshire, Lord Portman, Lord Taylor of Gorton, Sir Samuel Beckett, Mr William Butler, Sir Andrew Hodge, Sir John Lloyd, Mr Sir John Mason, Sir Ian Macdonald, Sir David Phillips, Sir Charles Rosen, Sir Trevor Storer, Mr Sir Robert Williams, Mr John Trevelyan and Sir Colin Woods.

Incorporated Society of Valuers and Auctioneers Mr Raymond H.J. Palmer, President of the Incorporated Society of Valuers and Auctioneers, was host at the society's annual luncheon for the year 1991-92, held yesterday at the Savoy Hotel. Mr Hugh R. Jenkins was the guest speaker. Others present included:

Mr Marcus Rose, Mr Sir Ronald Patrick Quinn, Mr Rex Sturmer and Mr James Wilson.

Water sports 'threat' to first nature reserve

BY JOHN SHAW

THE National Trust has lodged an objection "in the strongest possible terms" to plans for a big water sports scheme to be sited next to its first nature reserve at Wicken Fen near Ely, Cambridgeshire.

The fen, part of a hamlet between Newmarket and Ely, is one of the last remnants of the great fens of East Anglia now largely drained and given over to rich arable farmland. It is a grade I site of special scientific interest. The trust received European recognition for its management of the reserve last year with a Europa Nostra award.

Merlin Waterson, regional director for East Anglia, said Wicken was the trust's oldest reserve, with the first land purchased in 1899.

"The National Trust believes that this site, which has been protected for more than 90 years and which it is charged with protecting for the nation for ever, could be seriously affected by the proposed development and that the planning application should be rejected."

The scheme would transform Burwell Fen farm, next to the reserve, with the building a series of holding banks to flood 110 hectares of Grade I and 2 farmland and create lakes holding 2.4 million cubic metres of water. There would be an associated club house, 100 floating cottages and a car park. The application is now with East Cambridgeshire district council.

The nature reserve has already been given special protection by the district council's local plan and the trust says that the visual impact of the scheme would be totally unacceptable changes to the unique fen landscape.

At night, light from the club house and floodlighting would disturb wildlife and research into moths could be affected. At present the site is a refuge for many species of plant and animal life including 16 species of dragonfly and many hundreds of species of invertebrates. The site is visited by 35,000 people a year.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Joseph Priestley, clergyman and scientist, Bristol, Yorkshire, 1733; Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey, prime minister 1830-34, Fallowden, Northumberland, 1764; Thomas Henry Tizard, oceanographer and navigator, Weymouth, 1859; Percival Lowell, astronomer, Boston, Massachusetts, 1855; Hugo Wolf, composer of *Lieder*, Windischgratz, Austria (Slovenia), 1860; Sir Hugh Walpole, novelist, Auckland, New Zealand, 1884; George Sedaris, poet, Nobel laureate 1963, Smyrna, 1900.

DEATHS: Richard Burbage, actor, London, 1619; John Frederic Daniell, chemist, inventor of the Daniell cell, London, 1845; Alexander II, emperor of Russia 1855-81, assassinated, St Petersburg, 1881; Benjamin Harrison, 23rd president of the USA 1889-93, Indianapolis, 1901; Stephen Vincent Benet, novelist and poet, New York, 1943; Angela Brazil, writer of girls' school stories, Cowenry, 1947; Sir Frank Worrell, West Indian Test cricketer, Kingston, Jamaica, 1967.

Reception

British Safety Council The Rev Martin Smyth, MP, was host at a reception held yesterday at the House of Commons for the British Safety Council's presentation of Five-Star Health and Safety Management Awards.

Dr Hope's lonely warning to the City

BY BILL FROST

MANY were called, but few braved the wind and the rain yesterday as God and Mammon clashed in the City.

The Bishop of London, Dr David Hope, climbed the steps of the Royal Exchange to deliver a homily warning against ruthlessness, greed and wickedness. The ruthless, the wicked and the avaricious passed by on the other side of the street.

A further three cautionary sermons are planned. The organisers had hoped for 3,000 people yesterday. In the event, only 100 turned up. "All prayers for next time gratefully received," said a member of the bishop's staff.

A handful of wheedlers and dealers joined the windswept congregation yesterday. Philip Storr, Ventor, company secretary of the Tokio Marine and Fire Insurance Co (UK), said: "There are a lot of ruthless people in the City. Let us hope that these events are better advertised in the future."

Dr Hope, described by profile writers as "left-leaning",

told his waterlogged flock: "It is so easy to put our heads down and pursue another day into the morning rush without a thought for God or anyone else." Across the road, outside the Bank of England, two men - heads down and pursuing business - collided and locked umbrellas.

Dr Hope expressed his relief that the election had at last been called. "It is my fervent hope that all Christian people will pray for discernment and right judgment as they consider carefully the manifestos set before them," he said.

Half a dozen young German tourists left before the homily was over to gambol and take pictures of each other at a war memorial in front of the Royal Exchange.

Surfing Page, a personnel officer with merchant bankers Morgan Grenfell, was more impressed. "The bishop is an inspiring speaker. It is pity the weather and the publicity had not been better."

APPRECIATIONS

Jam Sadiq Ali

FURTHER to your obituary (March 7) on Jam Sadiq Ali, the controversial chief minister of Sindh province in Pakistan may I be allowed to make the following points?

Firstly, no mention was made of the great affection with which the Sindh and Muhajir people still held Jam Sadiq Ali after his 12 years of exile when he returned to Karachi in April 1989. This rejoicing was due mainly to his personal and political acts of kindness which the Karachi people remembered with adulation when they turned out in thousands to welcome him.

In London, too, while in exile, his home was a haven for Pakistanis who needed advice and support. A warm, generous hearted and witty man, he inspired great affection in others.

Your obituary stated "He fled to London after the coup as he feared arrest for his involvement in the murder of six members of the opposition Muslim League." This needs fairer detailed explanation.

Jam Sadiq Ali, a Shiite Muslim, had been until the late 1960s an ardent supporter of the Pir of Pagaro, the leader of the Huni, a fanatical group who believed that death in the service of their leader would ensure a passage to heaven.

Just before the election in 1970 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto managed to win Jam Sadiq Ali's support away from the Pir, who seemed then responsible for the revenge assassination of one of Jam Sadiq's closest associates, Ali Baksh Jumejo in 1973.

Bhutto's government wished to crush the violent Huni and in so doing committed acts of equivalent violence against them. Possibly because of this Jam Sadiq, a man of compassion and infectious zest for life, showed at times recurring unexpressed grief which he masked with a form of Bacchanal self-punishment that probably even

tually led to his own death. He did not merely flee from Karachi (after Zia's coup in 1977) but escaped from arrest in one of his brilliant moves for which he became famous. He had been tortured in an attempt to force him to sign a confession to incriminate Bhutto but had refused. He still bore the marks of his shackles and torture while he was living in exile in London.

Yahya Khan visited him in London in a vain attempt to persuade him to act as a witness against Bhutto. Jam Sadiq remained loyal to the latter and while in exile spoke with admiration and respect of his daughter Benazir's optimistic courage.

It is a tragedy for Sindh that, later, Benazir Bhutto and Jam Sadiq Ali could not mutually work with their considerable talents to bring peace and social justice to the province.

When he returned to Karachi in April 1989 Jam Sadiq Ali humbly offered his services to transform his beloved Sindh into a "cradle of peace and tranquility." As your obituary acknowledges, he did achieve much of his objective, yet at his death he might well have recollected the haunting verses of the Sindh poet, Shah Abdul Latif:

"This is the salt cry of Sindh As I die let me feel the fragrance of tears."

Audrey Wells



Bernard Krikler

MAY I add an appreciation to your obituary of Bernard Krikler (February 21), who was my friend for nearly 35 years?

He was a funny, generous, self-deprecating man; formidably intelligent and well-read. His wide circle of friends included a number of writers and I suspect that for all of us — certainly for myself — Bunny was a key figure in that private, internal audience — the audience within the audience — whose good opinion we most value. He was sympathetic but choosy, hard to please and harder still to fool.

He himself was sharply aware that he had not made the most of his very considerable natural abilities. I think this awareness became doubly important to him last

summer, after he learned that he was terminally ill. It was as though he took a deliberate decision that, having not done as much as he might have with his talents during his life, he would at least use them to die well.

The first time I saw him after his cancer was diagnosed he said, in an off-hand way, that he couldn't get some lines of Andrew Marvell's out of his head: "He nothing common did or mean Upon that memorable scene."

From then until the end he kept scrupulously to the high standard of behaviour he had set himself. His wit, good humour and intellectual appetite never faltered, nor did his alertness to other people's feelings. Once again, and for the last time, he was setting an example for his friends to live up to.

A. Alvarez

March 13 ON THIS DAY 1934

(Sir) Charles Cochran (1872-1957) In his letter of March 10 stated that "The Producer reads a manuscript and decides to produce it... He engages a director... the director is the man who trains and rehearses the actor... Cochran's first production was in 1897, his last in 1949."

PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir, The confusion which Mr Cochran says exists in the public mind regarding the functions of that comparative newcomer to the theatre, the "producer", and that still more recent arrival, via Hollywood, the "director", is scarcely surprising. Not many years ago plays were written by authors and "presented" by managers, some of whom — such as Sir Henry Irving, Sir Herbert Beerbaum Tree, and Sir George Alexander — were also gifted actors. In those days it was assumed that a play's producer, or manufacturer, was its author, the manager who staged it being the salesman — often a highly skilled salesman whose attractive presentation of his wares raised him to the level of an artist, though scarcely to that of a creative artist.

It is since the actor-manager disappeared that the "producer" has come into his (and other people's) own. Occasionally the person so described has been a first-class actor, but more often he has been an actor of not more than modest attainments. Now it would seem, if we accept Mr Cochran's definition, that he is simply our old friend the manager, with the difference that he is no longer content to "present" plays, but insists that he has "produced" them — which seems to me as reasonable as it would be for Mr Selfridge to claim to have produced the goods which, like Mr Cochran, he presents with much artistry.

No reasonable author (if such a person exists) will nowadays object to an actor claiming to be a producer, or a character which the dramatist may have presumably imagined was brought to birth in his own brain; but not a few authors are feeling a growing, though doubtless futile, resentment of the claims made and the prominence arrogated to themselves by various skilled but creatively unproductive servants of the theatre who are announced as having "produced" or "devised and supervised" theatrical entertainments.

One play that has now been running for months in London, and has now been staged in New York, is announced daily in *The Times* as being "directed" by a lady for whose talents in "creating a play and rehearsing it" I have a very high respect, but I have searched your theatre advertisement columns in vain for the name of the harmless, necessary author — although *The Times* is one of three daily newspapers in which mention of an author's name is (in the words of a playwright's production contract) "customary and usual".

I am also informed in your advertising columns that "Sir Oswald Stall presents Ludwig Berger's *The Golden Toy*", and it is an almost inaudible voice that goes on to whisper that this is "A Romantic Play by Carl Zuckmayer". Doubtless in this case it is intended, delicately to intimate that the scenic merry-go-round that Mr Berger directs is a much grander affair than the play, and the instances I have quoted (and many others) leave me wondering where were authors, and even actors — both of whom triumphantly existed for centuries before the birth of the "producer" — are fitted to rank in the theatre of tomorrow.

I am, Sir, your obedient and mystified servant, HARRISON OWEN S. Kensington S.W.5.

FRIDAY MARCH 13

Forthcoming marriages

Mr G.D. Addison and Miss K. K. Addison. The engagement is between Owen, son of Mr Addison, of Queens, and Miss K. K. Addison, daughter of Mr Addison, of Queens. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Dr R.G. Bell and Miss C.A. Webb. The engagement is between Dr Bell, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Webb, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr J.E. Child and Miss M.H. Stale. The engagement is between Mr Child, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Stale, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr R.N. Crane and Miss J.V. Crane. The engagement is between Mr Crane, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Crane, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr M. Horden and Miss J. Horden. The engagement is between Mr Horden, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Horden, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr M. Meacham and Miss C.M. Meacham. The engagement is between Mr Meacham, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Meacham, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr J. Pender and Miss A.M. Pender. The engagement is between Mr Pender, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Pender, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Dr W. Pugh and Miss L.H. Pugh. The engagement is between Dr Pugh, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Pugh, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr M. Steward and Miss M.L. Steward. The engagement is between Mr Steward, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Steward, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Mr J.K. Walsh and Miss C.M. Walsh. The engagement is between Mr Walsh, of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Miss Walsh, of the Royal College of Surgeons. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

Marriage

Mr J.K. Walsh and Miss C.M. Walsh. The wedding will take place at St. Paul's, Queens, on March 13.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

WORLD-WATCHING



Spring thaw: flood waters cover the streets of Montpelier in the New England state of Vermont after melting ice caused the Winooski river to burst its banks. An emergency has been declared in the area and the National Guard has been called out to co-ordinate rescue efforts

Politburo backs Deng on reforms

Continued from page 1
thrown his enemies into disarray. There are reports that some diehards have attempted to block the transmission of Mr Deng's reformist message through the party hierarchy. Others, who Mr Deng has criticised for blocking his reforms, are believed now to be scrambling to prove their reformist credentials and save their political lives.

That category is believed to include Li Peng, the prime minister, and Jiang Zemin, the Communist party general secretary, both of whom serve on the politburo.

Trying to steer a middle

path, Mr Deng has always tailored his message to the times. When he has wanted to promote liberal economic reform, he has warned against "the left". When he has been alarmed by pro-democracy demonstrations he has warned against "the right". Were the democracy movement to gain momentum once more, analysts believe that Mr Deng would swing back to an "anti-right", or anti-liberal, position. The politburo advocated "more courage in reform and opening, boldly bringing forth new ideas, and daring to experiment". There are more

concrete signs of the reformist message which has resurfaced in the past two months, too. Peking has given permission for a third stock market to open, this time in north China. The *Economic Daily* said yesterday that new economic zones were to be set up in areas along the Russian, North Korean and Mongolian borders to encourage trade and foreign investment. Zhang Youcai, the deputy finance minister, has issued a warning that China has three years to turn around its debt-ridden state sector, which has lost 31 billion yuan. China's

state sector has fiercely resisted reforms which might make it profitable. The politburo also brought back to life Mr Deng's famous saying that "it does not matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice". Hitting out at hardliners who insist that a line must be drawn between what is capitalist and what is socialist, the politburo decided that it really did not matter very much.

The *People's Daily* did not so much as utter headline phrases about Western subversion or capitalist plots. Nor did it give any hint of political reform or democratisation.

Citing Mr Deng, the politburo said it would "tightly

Krishna sect sees election kick off

Continued from page 1
with the local Tory-controlled Hertsmere council, which has been trying to prevent the manor being used for public worship because, it is claimed, the August festival of Janmasti — Krishna's birthday — attracts too much traffic into the village.

That Mrs Kinnock chose to make her appearance the day after an election was also coincidental, they said, that at the moment Mrs Kinnock was watching a bullock

ploughing display, the Court of Appeal was hearing the latest round of the temple's battle against the council. Shown round by Sruti Dharma, the head priest, wearing a brown woolly pullover over his pale orange dhoti, Mrs Kinnock settled herself into a classroom of under-fives. Being a teacher two days a week, she was instantly in command. "Who are all those funny men who have come into the room?" she asked the bemused infants. "Shall we have a competition to see which of the

funny men takes the best picture in tomorrow's papers?" Later, in a brief moment of seriousness, she said: "I have known for many years how important this place is to the Hindu community. Hopefully [the dispute] can be resolved to the satisfaction of the community and the people living in the village." She went in to a lunch of pakoras and three types of vegetarian curry, and came out with the gift of a takeaway for Neil's supper.

Diary, page 16

Deng's vain search, page 13

Maxwell's silence was contempt, say MPs

Continued from page 1

Mirror Group Newspapers

pension fund, were asked to appear before the committee in December but declined.

Letters from their solicitors at the time said that they had to comply with court orders and needed to deal with matters arising from "the collapse of numerous companies".

They were summoned again on January 13 but refused to answer any of the questions put to them by committee members.

The committee decided to send a questionnaire to all the trustees, making it clear that the answers would be made public. Three people refused to co-operate: Ian and Kevin Maxwell and Michael Stony, treasurer of the pension fund.

"The refusal of the Maxwell brothers to give evidence has been most harmful to the committee's activities," the report said. The committee said that it was unable to obtain information on the structure and control of the Maxwell empire, or how the pension fund operated.

Lack of time had prevented members from doing anything other than make a start on their enquiries into the plundering of assets from the pension fund, but committee

members were anxious, if re-elected, to continue their work, the report said.

"There is no doubt that to refuse to answer questions in front of a select committee is a serious matter. The House of Commons expressed its view in a resolution agreed on August 12, 1947, 'that the refusal of a witness before a Select Committee to answer any question which may be put to him is a contempt of the House and an infraction of the undoubted right of this House to conduct any enquiry which may be necessary in the public interest,' the report said.

"Although we believe that Ian Maxwell and Kevin Maxwell should be brought before the House for their refusal to answer questions properly put to them by the select committee, this has to be a matter for our successor committees."

The report added: "We also trust that they [the House of Commons] accept that there is a need for them to find an appropriate time to consider the question of Mr Ian Maxwell and Mr Kevin Maxwell's prima facie contempt of the House."

Leading article, page 17

Political sketch

Paradise lost in the bear garden

Weep, Tories! Wednesday was not a bad dream. The fruit-and-nut cases really have decided to call a general election now. Starship Westminster has moved into its terminal phase before they pull the "destruct" lever at Buckingham Palace.

Over in the House of Lords, peers whiled away their final hours discussing the merits of hard-boiled eggs, while in the Commons there was a development of the direct sort. Our representatives moved into after-dinner mode. MPs were saying goodbye.

Hon members started quoting Great Men and Women of History. The PM quoted Shakespeare. The Leader of the Opposition quoted Thatcher. Sir Bernard Braine quoted Burke. Andrew Faulds quoted Andrew Faulds, and Harry Ewing quoted the House of Commons barber.

I have thought hard before writing this. I have asked myself whether there is anything, anything, so noble as to justify comfortable, congratulatory speechmaking by elderly men. Sadly, I have had to conclude that there is not. "Sadly," because there can be no higher object of a sketchwriter's admiration than our retiring Speaker, Bernard Weatherill, and it was Mr Weatherill whom MPs came to Westminster to praise yesterday.

First, just for old times' sake, the Chamber enjoyed a 15-minute orgy of throat-busting, tongue-ripping, roiling, and it was their last question time. They would send their Speaker away with a rollicking example of what he will miss next year, as he dandles the little grandchild-Weatherills on his knee.

Labour barracked so nobody could hear Mr Major, the Tories howled so nobody could hear Mr Kinnock, and anonymous miscreants made squealing noises while Dame Elaine Kellert-Bowman (C. Lancaster) tried to speak.

Mr Speaker gazed, lovingly, and a little mischievously, at this paradise garden in which he now took his last stroll, and which he must soon leave: 450 grown men and women stabbed their fingers in the air and yelled fit to bring the rafters down, and I should like to record that tears of nostalgia rolled down Mr Speaker's cheeks, glanced from the woolly skirts of his full-bottomed wig, and splashed onto his

tights ... but I cannot. From where I sit, I could not see.

Little passed of note, Mr Ashdown has been agitating recently for a televised debate between himself, Mr Kinnock and Mr Major. Yesterday Ken Livingstone put the proposal to the prime minister. Replying, the PM ruled it completely out. At this point there was a rush of enthusiasm from Mr Kinnock for the idea. Why wouldn't the PM agree?

Mr Major quoted a remark about verbosity taken from Shakespearean comedy. Mr Kinnock trumped this with a quote from Thackeray tragedy: "He's there was much baying on all sides."

Which is why we were perplexed, later, when the father of the House, Sir Bernard Braine, paying his tribute to the Speaker, said: "I sometimes wonder what a rabbit this would be, were it not for you and your predecessors." I sometimes wonder what Sir Bernard calls "rabbit".

"I think it was Edmund Burke who said ...," mused Sir Bernard. When a speaker says this, thinking people rush for the doors. To miss Andrew Faulds (Lab. Warrley E). "So impartial have you been," he told the Speaker, "that I have never been able to tell whether you admire and approve of me ..."

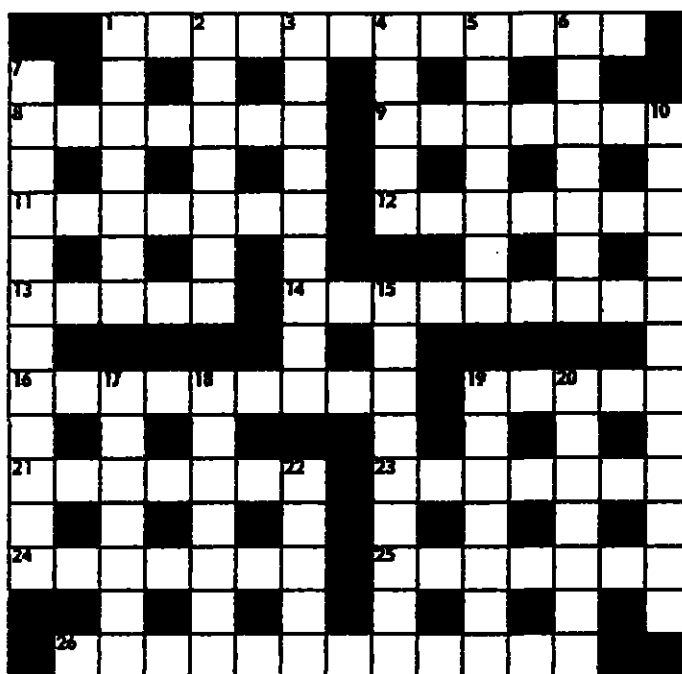
Mr Speaker's face was a mask of impartiality. "Or, rather, of impartiality." A hint of a smile played on those forgiving Weatherill features. The House roared its assent to the second of Mr Faulds's proposals.

And laughed when Mr Speaker's Spoken word was a Spoken word. During a haircut yesterday, he told us, the Commons hairdresser had enquired about Mr Ewing's majority and commented "You should be safe, sir."

"I did not tell him that, like you, I am retiring," said Mr Ewing. "He might have expected a bigger result. These were the highlights. The rest was worthy stuff, distinguished from the usual Commons exchanges by the fact that MPs meant what they were saying. On the whole, it's preferable when they don't. I think, who said ..."

MATTHEW PARRIS

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 18,865



WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which definitions are correct?
By Philip Howard

- PURLE**
a. An infant pullet
b. To whimper
c. A small harbour
- TELEMON**
a. A long-necked spider
b. A computer scanner
c. A machine for collating
- PULVERULENT**
a. Dusty
b. Very crumbly
c. Turning green in age
- FALDSTOOL**
a. A fold-down stool
b. A power stool
c. The autumn

Answers on page 18

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WEATHER

The southern half of England and Wales will start cloudy with patchy rain or drizzle, but most places will brighten up in the afternoon. North Wales, northern England, southernmost Scotland and Northern Ireland will have sleet or snow showers. The rest of Scotland will have snow showers, with significant drifting over high ground. It will be very windy everywhere. Outlook: Cloudy with patchy rain over Wales and southern England. Brighter elsewhere but with wintry showers.

ABROAD

MIDDAY: 1-hourly, 4-hourly, 8-hourly, 12-hourly, 16-hourly, 20-hourly, 24-hourly, 28-hourly, 32-hourly, 36-hourly, 40-hourly, 44-hourly, 48-hourly, 52-hourly, 56-hourly, 60-hourly, 64-hourly, 68-hourly, 72-hourly, 76-hourly, 80-hourly, 84-hourly, 88-hourly, 92-hourly, 96-hourly, 100-hourly, 104-hourly, 108-hourly, 112-hourly, 116-hourly, 120-hourly, 124-hourly, 128-hourly, 132-hourly, 136-hourly, 140-hourly, 144-hourly, 148-hourly, 152-hourly, 156-hourly, 160-hourly, 164-hourly, 168-hourly, 172-hourly, 176-hourly, 180-hourly, 184-hourly, 188-hourly, 192-hourly, 196-hourly, 200-hourly, 204-hourly, 208-hourly, 212-hourly, 216-hourly, 220-hourly, 224-hourly, 228-hourly, 232-hourly, 236-hourly, 240-hourly, 244-hourly, 248-hourly, 252-hourly, 256-hourly, 260-hourly, 264-hourly, 268-hourly, 272-hourly, 276-hourly, 280-hourly, 284-hourly, 288-hourly, 292-hourly, 296-hourly, 300-hourly, 304-hourly, 308-hourly, 312-hourly, 316-hourly, 320-hourly, 324-hourly, 328-hourly, 332-hourly, 336-hourly, 340-hourly, 344-hourly, 348-hourly, 352-hourly, 356-hourly, 360-hourly, 364-hourly, 368-hourly, 372-hourly, 376-hourly, 380-hourly, 384-hourly, 388-hourly, 392-hourly, 396-hourly, 400-hourly, 404-hourly, 408-hourly, 412-hourly, 416-hourly, 420-hourly, 424-hourly, 428-hourly, 432-hourly, 436-hourly, 440-hourly, 444-hourly, 448-hourly, 452-hourly, 456-hourly, 460-hourly, 464-hourly, 468-hourly, 472-hourly, 476-hourly, 480-hourly, 484-hourly, 488-hourly, 492-hourly, 496-hourly, 500-hourly, 504-hourly, 508-hourly, 512-hourly, 516-hourly, 520-hourly, 524-hourly, 528-hourly, 532-hourly, 536-hourly, 540-hourly, 544-hourly, 548-hourly, 552-hourly, 556-hourly, 560-hourly, 564-hourly, 568-hourly, 572-hourly, 576-hourly, 580-hourly, 584-hourly, 588-hourly, 592-hourly, 596-hourly, 600-hourly, 604-hourly, 608-hourly, 612-hourly, 616-hourly, 620-hourly, 624-hourly, 628-hourly, 632-hourly, 636-hourly, 640-hourly, 644-hourly, 648-hourly, 652-hourly, 656-hourly, 660-hourly, 664-hourly, 668-hourly, 672-hourly, 676-hourly, 680-hourly, 684-hourly, 688-hourly, 692-hourly, 696-hourly, 700-hourly, 704-hourly, 708-hourly, 712-hourly, 716-hourly, 720-hourly, 724-hourly, 728-hourly, 732-hourly, 736-hourly, 740-hourly, 744-hourly, 748-hourly, 752-hourly, 756-hourly, 760-hourly, 764-hourly, 768-hourly, 772-hourly, 776-hourly, 780-hourly, 784-hourly, 788-hourly, 792-hourly, 796-hourly, 800-hourly, 804-hourly, 808-hourly, 812-hourly, 816-hourly, 820-hourly, 824-hourly, 828-hourly, 832-hourly, 836-hourly, 840-hourly, 844-hourly, 848-hourly, 852-hourly, 856-hourly, 860-hourly, 864-hourly, 868-hourly, 872-hourly, 876-hourly, 880-hourly, 884-hourly, 888-hourly, 892-hourly, 896-hourly, 900-hourly, 904-hourly, 908-hourly, 912-hourly, 916-hourly, 920-hourly, 924-hourly, 928-hourly, 932-hourly, 936-hourly, 940-hourly, 944-hourly, 948-hourly, 952-hourly, 956-hourly, 960-hourly, 964-hourly, 968-hourly, 972-hourly, 976-hourly, 980-hourly, 984-hourly, 988-hourly, 992-hourly, 996-hourly, 1000-hourly, 1004-hourly, 1008-hourly, 1012-hourly, 1016-hourly, 1020-hourly, 1024-hourly, 1028-hourly, 1032-hourly, 1036-hourly, 1040-hourly, 1044-hourly, 1048-hourly, 1052-hourly, 1056-hourly, 1060-hourly, 1064-hourly, 1068-hourly, 1072-hourly, 1076-hourly, 1080-hourly, 1084-hourly, 1088-hourly, 1092-hourly, 1096-hourly, 1100-hourly, 1104-hourly, 1108-hourly, 1112-hourly, 1116-hourly, 1120-hourly, 1124-hourly, 1128-hourly, 1132-hourly, 1136-hourly, 1140-hourly, 1144-hourly, 1148-hourly, 1152-hourly, 1156-hourly, 1160-hourly, 1164-hourly, 1168-hourly, 1172-hourly, 1176-hourly, 1180-hourly, 1184-hourly, 1188-hourly, 1192-hourly, 1196-hourly, 1200-hourly, 1204-hourly, 1208-hourly, 1212-hourly, 1216-hourly, 1220-hourly, 1224-hourly, 1228-hourly, 1232-hourly, 1236-hourly, 1240-hourly, 1244-hourly, 1248-hourly, 1252-hourly, 1256-hourly, 1260-hourly, 1264-hourly, 1268-hourly, 1272-hourly, 1276-hourly, 1280-hourly, 1284-hourly, 1288-hourly, 1292-hourly, 1296-hourly, 1300-hourly, 1304-hourly, 1308-hourly, 1312-hourly, 1316-hourly, 1320-hourly, 1324-hourly, 1328-hourly, 1332-hourly, 1336-hourly, 1340-hourly, 1344-hourly, 1348-hourly, 1352-hourly, 1356-hourly, 1360-hourly, 1364-hourly, 1368-hourly, 1372-hourly, 1376-hourly, 1380-hourly, 1384-hourly, 1388-hourly, 1392-hourly, 1396-hourly, 1400-hourly, 1404-hourly, 1408-hourly, 1412-hourly, 1416-hourly, 1420-hourly, 1424-hourly, 1428-hourly, 1432-hourly, 1436-hourly, 1440-hourly, 1444-hourly, 1448-hourly, 1452-hourly, 1456-hourly, 1460-hourly, 1464-hourly, 1468-hourly, 1472-hourly, 1476-hourly, 1480-hourly, 1484-hourly, 1488-hourly, 1492-hourly, 1496-hourly, 1500-hourly, 1504-hourly, 1508-hourly, 1512-hourly, 1516-hourly, 1520-hourly, 1524-hourly, 1528-hourly, 1532-hourly, 1536-hourly, 1540-hourly, 1544-hourly, 1548-hourly, 1552-hourly, 1556-hourly, 1560-hourly, 1564-hourly, 1568-hourly, 1572-hourly, 1576-hourly, 1580-hourly, 1584-hourly, 1588-hourly, 1592-hourly, 1596-hourly, 1600-hourly, 1604-hourly, 1608-hourly, 1612-hourly, 1616-hourly, 1620-hourly, 1624-hourly, 1628-hourly, 1632-hourly, 1636-hourly, 1640-hourly, 1644-hourly, 1648-hourly, 1652-hourly, 1656-hourly, 1660-hourly, 1664-hourly, 1668-hourly, 1672-hourly, 1676-hourly, 1680-hourly, 1684-hourly, 1688-hourly, 1692-hourly, 1696-hourly, 1700-hourly, 1704-hourly, 1708-hourly, 1712-hourly, 1716-hourly, 1720-hourly, 1724-hourly, 1728-hourly, 1732-hourly, 1736-hourly, 1740-hourly, 1744-hourly, 1748-hourly, 1752-hourly, 1756-hourly, 1760-hourly, 1764-hourly, 1768-hourly, 1772-hourly, 1776-hourly, 1780-hourly, 1784-hourly, 1788-hourly, 1792-hourly, 1796-hourly, 1800-hourly, 1804-hourly, 1808-hourly, 1812-hourly, 1816-hourly, 1820-hourly, 1824-hourly, 1828-hourly, 1832-hourly, 1836-hourly, 1840-hourly, 1844-hourly, 1848-hourly, 1852-hourly, 1856-hourly, 1860-hourly, 1864-hourly, 1868-hourly, 1872-hourly, 1876-hourly, 1880-hourly, 1884-hourly, 1888-hourly, 1892-hourly, 1896-hourly, 1900-hourly, 1904-hourly, 1908-hourly, 1912-hourly, 1916-hourly, 1920-hourly, 1924-hourly, 1928-hourly, 1932-hourly, 1936-hourly, 1940-hourly, 1944-hourly, 1948-hourly, 1952-hourly, 1956-hourly, 1960-hourly, 1964-hourly, 1968-hourly, 1972-hourly, 1976-hourly, 1980-hourly, 1984-hourly, 1988-hourly, 1992-hourly, 1996-hourly, 2000-hourly, 2004-hourly, 2008-hourly, 2012-hourly, 2016-hourly, 2020-hourly, 2024-hourly, 2028-hourly, 2032-hourly, 2036-hourly, 2040-hourly, 2044-hourly, 2048-hourly, 2052-hourly, 2056-hourly, 2060-hourly, 2064-hourly, 2068-hourly, 2072-hourly, 2076-hourly, 2080-hourly, 2084-hourly, 2088-hourly, 2092-hourly, 2096-hourly, 2100-hourly, 2104-hourly, 2108-hourly, 2112-hourly, 2116-hourly, 2120-hourly, 2124-hourly, 2128-hourly, 2132-hourly, 2136-hourly, 2140-hourly, 2144-hourly, 2148-hourly, 2152-hourly, 2156-hourly, 2160-hourly, 2164-hourly, 2168-hourly, 2172-hourly, 2176-hourly, 2180-hourly, 2184-hourly, 2188-hourly, 2192-hourly, 2196-hourly, 2200-hourly, 2204-hourly, 2208-hourly, 2212-hourly, 2216-hourly, 2220-hourly, 2224-hourly, 2228-hourly, 2232-hourly, 2236-hourly, 2240-hourly, 2244-hourly, 2248-hourly, 2252-hourly, 2256-hourly, 2260-hourly, 2264-hourly, 2268-hourly, 2272-hourly, 2276-hourly, 2280-hourly, 2284-hourly, 2288-hourly, 2292-hourly, 2296-hourly, 2300-hourly, 2304-hourly, 2308-hourly, 2312-hourly, 2316-hourly, 2320-hourly, 2324-hourly, 2328-hourly, 2332-hourly, 2336-hourly, 2340-hourly, 2344-hourly, 2348-hourly, 2352-hourly, 2356-hourly, 2360-hourly, 2364-hourly, 2368-hourly, 2372-hourly, 2376-hourly, 2380-hourly, 2384-hourly, 2388-hourly, 2392-hourly, 2396-hourly, 2400-hourly, 2404-hourly, 2408-hourly, 2412-hourly, 2416-hourly, 2420-hourly, 2424-hourly, 2428-hourly, 2432-hourly, 2436-hourly, 2440-hourly, 2444-hourly, 2448-hourly, 2452-hourly, 2456-hourly, 2460-hourly, 2464-hourly, 2468-hourly, 2472-hourly, 2476-hourly, 2480-hourly, 2484-hourly, 2488-hourly, 2492-hourly, 2496-hourly, 2500-hourly, 2504-hourly, 2508-hourly, 2512-hourly, 2516-hourly, 2520-hourly, 2524-hourly, 2528-hourly, 2532-hourly, 2536-hourly, 2540-hourly, 2544-hourly, 2548-hourly, 2552-hourly, 2556-hourly, 2560-hourly, 2564-hourly, 2568-hourly, 2572-hourly, 2576-hourly, 2580-hourly, 2584-hourly, 2588-hourly, 2592-hourly, 2596-hourly, 2600-hourly, 2604-hourly, 2608-hourly, 2612-hourly, 2616-hourly, 2620-hourly, 2624-hourly, 2628-hourly, 2632-hourly, 2636-hourly, 2640-hourly, 2644-hourly, 2648-hourly, 2652-hourly, 2656-hourly, 2660-hourly, 2664-hourly, 2668-hourly, 2672-hourly, 2676-hourly, 2680-hourly, 2684-hourly, 2688-hourly, 2692-hourly, 2696-hourly, 2700-hourly, 2704-hourly, 2708-hourly, 2712-hourly, 2716-hourly, 2720-hourly, 2724-hourly, 2728-hourly, 2732-hourly, 2736-hourly, 2740-hourly, 2744-hourly, 2748-hourly, 2752-hourly, 2756-hourly, 2760-hourly, 2764-hourly, 2768-hourly, 2772-hourly, 2776-hourly, 2780-hourly, 2784-hourly, 2788-hourly, 2792-hourly, 2796-hourly, 2800-hourly, 2804-hourly, 2808-hourly, 2812-hourly, 2816-hourly, 2820-hourly, 2824-hourly, 2828-hourly, 2832-hourly, 2836-hourly, 2840-hourly, 2844-hourly, 2848-hourly, 2852-hourly, 2856-hourly, 2860-hourly, 2864-hourly

Coal plan is dead, ABP says

BY MARTIN BARROW

ASSOCIATED British Ports insisted that plans to build Britain's largest coal import facility would not be resurrected, whatever the outcome of the election. Alternative uses, including containers and grain, were being considered for the capacity that would have been taken up at Immingham, Humberside.

TI chiefs to lose bonuses

THE 40 or so top executives at TI Group, the specialist engineering, will lose their performance-related bonuses after pre-tax profits fell from £128.4 million to £105.2 million in the year to end-December.

The biggest loser will be the chairman, Christopher Lewinton, who accounted for £328,000 of the £720,000 paid out to the top managers last year. But shareholders are not sharing the pain: a final dividend of 13.5p gives a total of 20.5p, up 5p on the 19.5p paid last year.

Mr Lewinton said the increased payment, which reduces dividend cover from 2.8 times to 2.2 times, reflected TI's progressive dividend policy. "We obviously have confidence in the future of the company and we have the resources to do it."

He is taking a cautious stance on prospects for the current year and is not hailing "straws in the wind" in the form of increased orders for some products, particularly American automotive components, as evidence of a pronounced upturn. TI expects no recovery in Britain until 1993, while a return to growth in America in the second half of this year will be very slow when it comes.

Times, page 24

Plans to build a £150 million terminal were abandoned last month after PowerGen, one of two electricity generators involved in the project, requested a delay, apparently until after the election, before contracts were signed.

Labour Party officials have indicated that coal imports might be blocked by a Labour government. Yesterday, ABP again denied there had been political pressure to drop the proposals.

Sir Keith Stuart, chairman, said the decision to cancel was prompted by a late request from PowerGen to defer agreements that had been under negotiation for 18 months. "The scheme for a dedicated coal import facility is dead," he said. "They (PowerGen) had their chance and they missed it."

He said Immingham was "bursting at the seams", additional deep-water capacity was essential.

ABP, Britain's biggest ports group, announced a decline in pre-tax profits from £60.2 million to £31 million in 1991. The results were in line with a warning by the company in January.

The total dividend is increased from 7.25p a share to 8p, with a final payment of 4.9p (4.5p). The shares fell 11p to 348p, but remain 29p above the price that obtained when the profit warning was given.

The company has provided a further £29.7 million against property developments, resulting in an overall loss of £29 million on property activities.

The core ports and transport business increased profits from £59.5 million to £76.1 million, with total tonnage rising from 101 million tonnes to 106 million despite the recession. Since the year-end, the company has agreed to buy a 45 per cent stake in Tilbury Container Services and secured a contract to export Toyota cars from Grimsby when production at Derby begins later this year.

RTZ profits slide 39% to £308m



JOHN MANNING

RTZ Corporation, the world's largest mining group, where Sir Derek Birkin (right) is chairman and Robert Wilson (left) is chief executive, reported a 39 per cent fall in net attributable profit to £308 million for last year.

Lower metal prices accounted for £104 million of the setback and reduced volumes for £21 million. North American profits fell from £296 million to £183 million, while RTZ made a £2 million loss in Britain against profits of £18 million. However, RTZ is holding its

final dividend at 13.5p, making an unchanged total of 19.5p. The shares rose 20p to 559p.

The £308 million result is after an exceptional item of £46 million, net RTZ also made a £103 million extraordinary provision, below the line, essentially to cover the now-moribund Bougainville copper mine in Papua New Guinea. Sir Derek and Mr Wilson believe RTZ's fortunes will improve as world economies and metal markets revive. RTZ's balance sheet is sound, the

low-cost base can be trimmed further and RTZ can cope financially with expansion and development projects. However, the prospects for 1992 are overshadowed by the recessions in America and Britain and by slower growth in OECD economies.

Capital plans include a \$880 million smelter and refinery expansion in Utah and at least a dozen other potential projects in various parts of the world.

Times, page 24

Motor manufacturers look to Budget measure to boost production

Car output for exports falls 16%

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

CAR exports continued to slide last month, underlining the rapid slowdown of overseas markets combined with the difficult domestic conditions faced by the motor manufacturers.

Total production from British car factories in the first two months has gone down from 209,737 from the 222,632 recorded in the same period last year, a fall of 5.79 per cent.

Output rallied slightly last month, with factories turning

out 114,492 cars, 4.88 per cent ahead of February, 1991, but there are still no clear signs of a significant revival for the industry.

With registrations 12 per cent down in the home market last month, the lapse in exports is starting to worry manufacturers.

Output for export dropped almost 16 per cent in February to 48,007, compared with 56,962 in the same month of last year. Over the first two months of the year, export

production is down by 18.3 per cent on last year's 109,547.

All Britain's main manufacturers are now geared to high export sales and a significant slowdown could force further production cuts and put hundreds more jobs in danger in an industry suffering greatly from cutbacks.

However, there were signs at last of gains for the hard-hit commercial vehicle industry. Both domestic and export production increased in February to 21,315, a 13.2 per cent improvement on February, 1991. Exports at 12,966 were 45.5 per cent up.

In spite of the wavering in car exports, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders was optimistic, particularly after the Budget measures to halve the special car tax to 5 per cent.

Sir Hal Miller, the SMMT's chief executive, said: "With the Budget boost for the home market, the outlook is decidedly better."

Abbeycrest damaged by soaring bad debts

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

ABBEYCREST, Britain's largest jewellery manufacturer and supplier, said that despite extensive discounting by retail jewellers at Christmas which stimulated volumes, the market still contracted by 20 per cent and bad debt soared in the most challenging year the group had faced.

The group has made a charge of £494,000 against the profit and loss account to cover bad debts and future provisions after several of its retail customers went out of business. Pre-tax profits in 1991 fell from £4.31 million to £3.35 million on sales of £60 million down from £60.2 million. Earnings per share fell from 3.6p to 3.2p and the

final dividend is 2p per share, making a total of 3.2p (3.6p).

Michael Lever, the group's chairman, says current trading levels are marginally behind those for the same period last year. "The general economic outlook, together with the depressed state of the retail jewellery market, do not create grounds for optimism in the short term. In the light of this, we are taking a very cautious approach to credit exposure with our customers," he said. "This is likely to have an impact on levels of business but, we believe, only prudent in the current circumstances." Mr Lever said, adding that the group has increased its market share.

COMPANY BRIEFS

ATP COMMUNICATIONS
Pre-tax: Loss £29,000
EPS: 0.57p (0.72p)
Div: Nil (nil)

CIA GROUP (Fin)
Pre-tax: £2.68m (£2.45m)
EPS: 13.82p (11.65p)
Div: 2.6p, mkg 3.75p

KODE INTERNATIONAL
Pre-tax: £485,000
EPS: 4.3p (5.8p)
Div: 3p, mkg 4p (7.5p)

EDMOND HOLDINGS (Fin)
Pre-tax: £1.73m (£3m)
EPS: 2.41p (4.15p)
Div: 1.2p, mkg 1.85p

T CLARKE (Fin)
Pre-tax: £1.88m (£5.08m)
EPS: 9.8p (26.08p)
Div: 5.22p

EFT GROUP (Fin)
Pre-tax: £1.07m
EPS: 2.22p (1.62p)
Div: 0.77p, mkg 1.1p

SIRDAR (Int)
Pre-tax: £2.81m (£2.1m)
EPS: 3.25p (2.27p)
Div: 1.85p (1.65p)

CHURCH & CO (Fin)
Pre-tax: £1.7m (£3.58m)
EPS: 11.6p (22.8p)
Div: 9.5p, mkg 12.5p

WHITEGATE LEISURE
Pre-tax: Loss £1.09m
EPS: 4.2p (EPS: 3.3p)
Div: Nil (1.8p)

EW FACT (Fin)
Pre-tax: £1.01m
EPS: 10.53p (8.98p)
Div: 3.1p, mkg 4.31p

NORTH MIDLAND
Pre-tax: £555,000
EPS: 3.8p (6.5p)
Div: 0.5p, mkg 1p

SLEEPY KIDS (Fin)
Pre-tax: Loss £155,927
EPS: 0.74p (4.22p)
Div: Nil

Interim results. ATP is raising £1m via placing and open offer at 2p a share and reorganising its capital. Last time's loss was £48,000.

Last time's total dividend was 3.2p. CIA has started 1992 with new business wins of more than £20m.

Final results. Last time's profit was £504,000. Exceptional debt of £122,000 (£57,000). Turnover fell to £15.7m (£18m).

Last time's total dividend was 1.85p. Gearing reduced from 65% to 41%. Interest costs fell to £1.06m (£1.43m).

Turnover fell to £59.2m (£76m). Figures for year to end-December 1991 are prepared under historical cost convention.

Last time's profit was £768,000. Last time's total dividend was 1p. Extraordinary debt of £150,000 (£304,000).

Total yarn sales fell 9%. Turnover fell to £27.1m (£27.5m). Company expects the future to continue to be difficult.

Last time's total dividend was 12.5p. Exceptional costs of £280,000 (nil). Turnover slipped to £65.2m (£68.6m).

Final results. Last time's profit was £1.18m. Extraordinary items of £8.54m were deducted as were exceptional items of £784,000.

Last time's profit was £867,000. Last time's total dividend was 3.85p. Extraordinary charges (net of tax) £287,000 (£134,000).

Final results. Last time's profit was £1.02m. Last time's total dividend was 1.25p. Turnover climbed to £24.4m (£24m).

Comparative figures are for 15 months. Last time's loss was £805,869. Extraordinary deduction of £17,234 (nil).

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Abbott Mead holds fall in profits to 4%

PRE-TAX profits at Abbott Mead Vickers, the advertising group, fell 4.4 per cent to £5 million last year despite an average fall of 10 per cent in the amount spent on advertising by its clients. A final dividend of 5.6p (5.1p) makes a total of 8.4p, an 8 per cent increase. Turnover rose from £130 million to £159 million, helped by a first-time contribution from BBDO, the London advertising agency that AMV bought from Omnicom, its 24.5 per cent shareholder, in March.

David Abbott, the chairman, said the group had worked hard on the integration of BBDO and was now seeing a progressive improvement in its profitability. New business last year brought in £26 million of billings and included Network South-East, Ski Yoghurt and the London Fire Brigade. The improvement has continued into this year, with an annualised £9 million of new billings won to date.

NSA pays dividend

NORTH Sea Assets, the energy support services group, has returned to the dividend list with a 0.75p payout for 1991. A dividend was last paid in 1985. The company lifted profits from £1.21 million before tax to £2.08 million for the full year, with earnings up from 2.81p a share to 4.16p. The results reflect the decision to withdraw from loss-making shipping activities. In November, the company sold its ship management business, and by the year-end had sold six wholly owned vessels. NSA now has four businesses providing specialist services to the offshore oil and gas industry. The company's principal market is the North Sea but it plans to achieve a wider spread through acquisition, said Philip Parker, chief executive.

Hall Engineering up

A MUCH improved second half helped pre-tax profits at Hall Engineering (Holdings), the Shrewsbury metal stockholder and processor, edge up to £5.07 million in the year to end-December, from £5.06 million last time. Turnover fell to £147 million (£190 million). An extraordinary charge of £6.9 million was incurred after the group's decision last year to close its British Reinforced Concrete Engineering subsidiary's Stafford factory and the termination of the Weldmesh and fencing operations. There was an exceptional debit of £531,000. Interest costs fell 20.6 per cent to £4.34 million. Earnings per share slip from 12.68p to 11.34p. The final dividend is being maintained at 5.34p, making an unchanged total of 8.64p.

Ex-Lands lifts profit

EX-LANDS, a former mining company being turned into a golf and leisure group, made pre-tax profits of £33,000 in the six months to December 31, compared with £19,000 last time. Last June, the company raised £4.9 million through a rights issue to pay for golf developments in Hamburg and Stuttgart. It is involved in a similar development in Vichy, France. The group said the developments should produce surpluses of £10 million when completed. If those were written into the balance sheet now, the company said it would have a net asset value per share of 36p. The Stuttgart course is scheduled for completion in 1994. Construction work at Hamburg and Vichy has not yet begun. There is again no interim dividend.

Cannon Street sale

CANNON Street Investments, a troubled mini-conglomerate, is continuing its programme of disposals with the sale of Stalbridge Kwik Klean Laundry to a management buyout team for £4.13 million. The disposal will reduce Cannon Street's debts by £5 million, although the group has been forced to guarantee up to £2 million of the new company's debts. Stalbridge has net assets of £2.9 million, so the sale will increase Cannon Street's net assets by £1.25 million. The disposal, along with the flotation of Avonside, Cannon Street's housebuilding subsidiary, and the sale of part of its stake in Betacom, the telephone distributor, will cut Cannon Street's debts by £50 million to £47 million.

PFG calls rights issue

PFG Hodgson Kenyon International, the UK's largest quoted undertaker, announced a £10.5 million two-for-three rights issue at 40p a share. The terms could leave its French shareholders owning more than half the company. The proceeds will be used to cut gearing from 415 per cent to 108 per cent. Omnium de Gestion et de Financement, which, through its subsidiary, Pompes Funèbres Générales, is a 27 per cent shareholder, will be sole underwriter. Pre-tax profits for the year to end-December were £6.6 million (£8.1 million). A 2p (1.5p) final dividend makes 3p (3.6p).

Interest Rates as at 13th March 1992

| DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS | gross interest rate p.a. | gross compounded annual rate |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Three Month Reserve Account | | |
| £50,000 + | 10.125% | 10.52% |
| £25,000-£49,999 | 9.875% | 10.25% |
| £10,000-£24,999 | 9.50% | 9.84% |
| Reserve Account for Personal Customers | | |
| £50,000 + | 8.750% | 9.04% |
| £20,000-£49,999 | 8.250% | 8.51% |
| £5,000-£19,999 | 7.750% | 7.98% |
| Reserve Account for Businesses/Charities/Societies | | |
| £100,000-£1 million | 8.50% | 8.78% |
| £25,000-£99,999 | 8.25% | 8.51% |
| £10,000-£24,999 | 7.625% | 7.85% |
| 7 Day Notice Deposit Account | 1.50% | 1.51% |
| TESSA | 10.00% | 10.38% |
| Charity TESSA | 9.00% | 9.31% |

- We are able to place sterling and currency with the Money Markets. Rates are subject to daily variation. Further details may be obtained from your branch.
- Where appropriate, Basic Rate Tax will be deducted from interest credited or paid (which may be reclaimed by resident non-taxpayers). Subject to the required registration form, interest will be paid gross.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Gold Card Overdraft Facility | 13.50% p.a. |
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| (where prior agreement has not been made) | |
| Personal Loan Rate | 25.50% APR |
| House Mortgage Rate | 11.00% p.a. |

- Written quotations available on request.
- Security may be required for mortgages and other types of loan.



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WORLDWIDE SPECIALISED ENGINEERING

TI Group — Full Year 1991

| | 1991 | 1990 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Sales | £900m | £894m |
| Pre-tax profit | £105.2m | £128.4m |
| Earnings per share | 44.8p | 55.5p |
| Dividend | 20.5p | 19.5p |

"Strong investment programmes, continued commitment to our strategy and the quality of our worldwide management teams enable us to view the future with confidence."

Christopher Lewinton, Chairman



TI GROUP

For further information about the TI Group, contact the Department of Public Affairs, TI Group plc, World Operating Headquarters, Lambour Court, Abingdon Business Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1UH.

The contents of this advertisement, for which the directors of TI Group plc are responsible, have been approved for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986 by Price Waterhouse, a firm authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to carry on investment business.

Accounting saves L&G from the red

BY JONATHAN PRYNN

NEW accounting practice saved Legal & General, the life and general insurance group, from falling into the red last year, despite huge losses on its general insurance underwriting.

The group transferred its unit assurance and unit pensions business to the main life fund in July, realising an £81.5 million gain. This was recorded as an exceptional item in line with new Accounting Standards Board recommendations.

The exceptional gain left pre-tax profits for the year to end-December at £11.3 million compared with £68.6 million last year. The group also made a £24.6 million loss, the first in living memory, at the halfway stage.

The damage was done by large provisions on mortgage guarantee underwriting and losses on the property accounts, mainly through subsidiary and recession-related claims. Total general insurance losses were £176 million.

David Prosser, chief executive since September, said there would be more losses on

general insurance in the current year but he expected a recovery in 1993. The low point of a prolonged recession was not the time to decide whether the group should stay in general insurance.

Mr Prosser said steps were being taken to improve the performance of the general insurance operations. The number of branch offices has been reduced from 20 to 12, and premium rates on the motor account were increased 20 per cent last year and another 12 per cent in January with more to come in 1992. Premium rates on mortgage guarantee business have been raised 50 per cent this year.

In January, Legal & General reduced its exposure to domestic property insurance by reinsuring 40 per cent of its household account, in line with Mr Prosser's stated policy of reducing group exposure to the volatility of general insurance.

Worldwide profits from life and pensions business rose from £118.7 million, excluding the divested Victory rein-

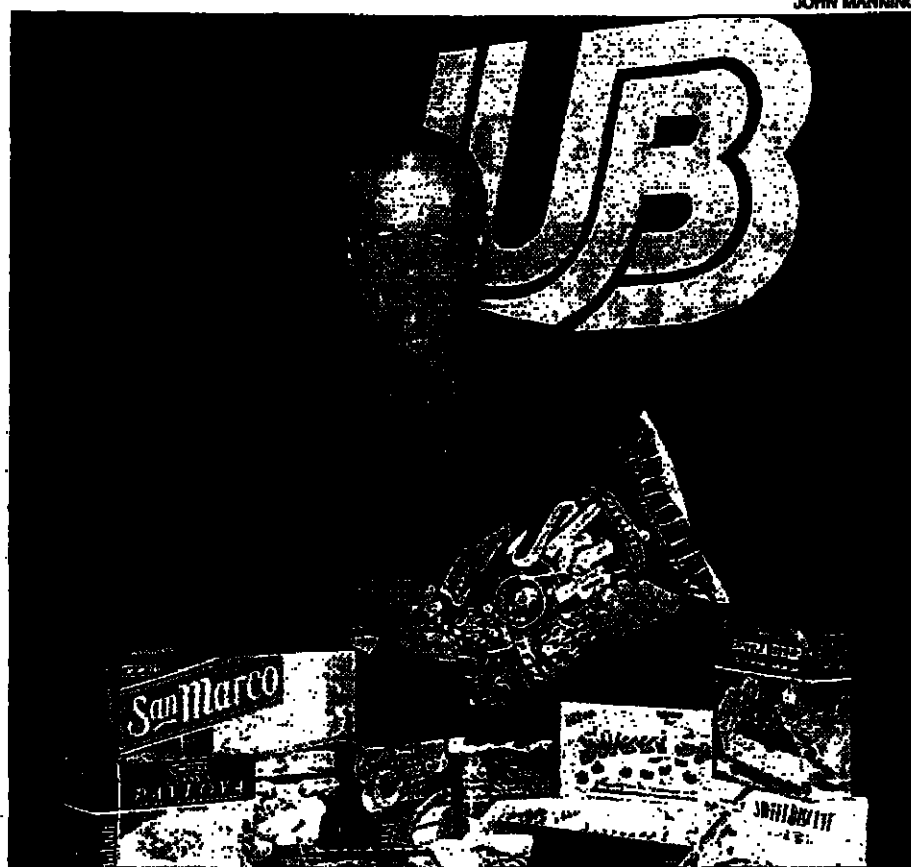
surance business, to £126.4 million. UK life and pensions business saw profits reach £103.2 million from £98.5 million. Mr Prosser said that the bright prospects for the group's long-term business justified the 5 per cent dividend rise to 18.8p (17.9p).

The balance sheet showed £10 million of borrowings on core shareholder funds and a 70 per cent solvency rating. The group has retained its AAA claims payment ratings from Moody's as well as Standard & Poor's. Shareholder value in the life fund increased from £1.58 billion to £1.71 billion after shareholder distributions.

As with some other insurance groups, Legal & General has moved to protect its solvency ratio by taking out a put option on 25 per cent of the £130 million of shareholder funds it has invested in UK equities.

The option runs until the end of June and would be triggered by a sharp stock market fall.

Comment, page 25



Top man: Robert Clarke, the chairman of United Biscuits, yesterday

Evered builds barricades

BY MARTIN WALLER

THE desire to ward off predators prompted a maintained dividend at Evered Bardon, a quarrying and building materials group formed by merger last year. Rising interest costs, falling workload and a squeeze on margins left pre-tax profits almost halved to £26.9 million in the year to December 31.

The figure comprises a ten-month contribution from Bardon and a full year from Evered. The clearest compar-

ison, therefore, is with the £47.7 million of pre-tax profits made by the two together in 1990.

Earnings fell from 12.7p to 5.1p a share. The dividend is maintained at 5.59p, with a final of 3.66p, but the payment is uncovered and leaves a £7.3 million retained loss for the year. The shares dropped 4 1/2p to 74p. Assets per share are shown at 90p.

Peter Tom, the chief executive, said continued dividend

income would depend on an upturn in the group's American activities. Evered is expected to benefit from a recently announced \$151 billion federal road programme.

The decision to hold the payout had been prompted by concern that a cut might depress the share price and lead to an opportunistic bid for the company, he added.

"This is a sector at the moment that's being restructured."

Capital in sale of theatre

Eddie Kukulandis, the theatrical producer, has completed the £2.7 million acquisition of the Duke of York's theatre from Capital Radio, which bought the West End theatre in 1979. Mr Kukulandis has bought the theatre in conjunction with London Turn-Style (DOY), a private company. The partnership paid Capital £275,000 in February for an option to acquire the theatre.

The theatre has been refurbished since Capital acquired the freehold and was valued at £1.35 million when Capital was floated on the stock market in 1987. Its disposal is the first significant change in Capital's strategy since Richard Eyre became managing director at the beginning of the year and ended Capital's cash balances, which at the September year-end stood at £18.1 million.

Mark's and Spencer is bringing in an outside retail chain to take the first ever concession in a Marks store, a five-year experiment which will see Scottish Power selling electrical goods from the first floor of Marks' Dunfermline outlet.

Bid study
Sir Gordon Borrie, the director general of fair trading, has extended for 15 days his study of the agreed bid by Carlton Communications for Pickwick Group to April 13.

Emess falls
Pre-tax profits at Emess fell to £4.2 million (£7.4 million) last year. A final dividend of 0.35p (2.2p) makes 1p (3.5p).

Baynes rises
Charles Baynes's pre-tax profits rose 20.3 per cent to £6.75 million last year. A final dividend of 0.85p (0.8p) makes 1.35p (1.2p).

Grampian buys
Grampian Holdings is buying the business and assets of Peter Hand Animal Health for £7.5 million in cash from Hillsdown Holdings. The business, based in Leyland in Lancashire, manufactures, markets and distributes animal health products.

Labour urges energy shake-up

BY ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S energy industry will be given obligations and incentives designed to achieve the "optimum level of national self-sufficiency in energy" if Labour wins power.

Opposition energy spokesman Frank Dobson said: "Labour will seek to maximise oil output from the North Sea by introducing tax incentives to encourage full use of marginal fields."

A Labour government might hold talks with the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries if that would help improve oil price stability.

Burning of gas in power stations would be restricted. That would reduce upward pressure on gas prices and help arrest sliding demand for British mined coal.

In a further effort to preserve collieries, open-cast mining and coal imports would be restricted. Nuclear power stations would be shut at the end of their safe working lives, and no new ones built.

At the same time, the gas and electricity industries would be required to introduce energy efficiency programmes that would trim demand by industrial and domestic users.

And a Renewable Energy

Agency would be set up to promote the construction of power plants generating electricity from wave action, water power, wind and bio-gas.

Mr Dobson said: "We will aim for self-sufficiency in fuel. Clearly we are not going to be wholly self-sufficient, but it has always been the objective of British Energy policy, as it has of European Community energy policy, to be as self-sufficient as possible."

Mr Dobson said self-sufficiency was necessary "partly for national security and partly because of the impact on the country's balance of payments."

The objectives would require considerable adjustments by Britain's energy industry, particularly in the newly privatised electricity generating industry.

Labour and the Conservatives now agree on the need to limit further construction of combined cycle gas turbine power stations. But Mr Dobson signalled that Labour may go further. Existing obligations on regional electricity supply companies to buy the cheapest power could be enforced, thereby discouraging the use of gas plants for base load power generation.

Gatt attacks US over trade pacts

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

AMERICAN trade policy has been heavily criticised by the secretary of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which is concerned about Washington's reliance on unilateral retaliation and regional pacts that threaten free world trade.

A regular Gatt review of American policy, published yesterday, singled out Washington's attitude to preferential regional arrangements, such as the North American free trade zone it is creating with Canada and Mexico, as the most visible, and perhaps the most important, development in American policy.

America has also extracted a bilateral deal with Japan aimed at reducing its huge

trade deficit with the Japanese. Gatt said the size of the economies involved "could, through trade diversion, adversely affect third parties' trade with the United States."

While acknowledging America's declared intention of adhering to Gatt rules, the report issued a caution about the "critically important stage" of evolution for the multi-lateral trading system. It contrasts hopes of successfully completing the deadlocked Uruguay Round negotiations to liberalise world trade with increasing concern about the "erosion of Gatt principles by regionalism, bilateralism, unilateralism or various forms of 'managed' trade."

United Biscuits profit growth surprises market

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

NEARLY £3 billion worth of McVitie's biscuits, KP snacks, Terry's chocolates, Keebler nibbles and Ross Young meals were consumed last year, pushing United Biscuits profits up 8 per cent and surprising the market with the strength of its profit growth during the recession.

Group pre-tax profits rose 8 per cent to £211 million in 1991, on turnover up 9 per cent to £2.98 billion. Trading profits grew by 12 per cent to £245 million and the trading margin increased by 0.2 percentage points to 8.2 per cent. Fully diluted earnings per share rose 9 per cent to 29.5p. The final dividend is 9.8p, making a total of 15.3p for the year, up 6 per cent.

The group has changed its accounting policy in line with a new requirement on American post-retirement health-care costs. This wiped £3.1 million off 1991 profits. Results for 1990 have also been restated to reflect the change.

McVitie's Group, the European biscuit business, increased profits by 18 per cent to £107 million on sales up 22 per cent to £787 million. In the United Kingdom, biscuit volumes rose by 2 per cent, although there has been a switch away from premium-priced chocolate products towards snack biscuits.

Keebler, the American snack business, saw margins grow from 6.2 to 6.6 per cent in spite of difficult market

conditions. Profits grew by 14 per cent to \$114 million on sales up 7 per cent at \$1.72 billion.

KP, the group's snack business that has 40 per cent of the British market, saw profits rise 5 per cent to £43.5 million, on sales up 14 per cent to £504 million, helped by the launch of Frispe, which has become a brand leader along with Hula Hoops, Skips, Discos and KP Nuts. KP's trading margin fell slightly to 10.1 per cent, reflecting downgrading by consumers from branded crisps to own label and an increased marketing spend.

Linda McCartney's range of vegetarian dishes and the San Marco pizza range were two successes in an otherwise difficult market for Ross Young, the group's chilled and frozen food business. Trading margins fell and profits were down 9 per cent to £27.5 million, on sales down 4 per cent at £543 million.

The programme of rationalisation at the division has continued with 1,000 jobs going in 1991, taking the number of employees to fewer than 6,000. Three businesses were disposed of and two factories were shut.

Profits at Terry's Group rose 2 per cent to £14.3 million, on sales up 10 per cent at £153 million.

Tempos, page 24



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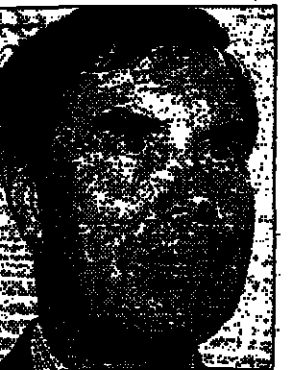
Enterprise Oil slips 30%

BY MARTIN BARROW

ENTERPRISE OIL, the independent exploration and production company, announced a 5 per cent dividend increase, failing to meet analysts' downgraded forecasts, in response to a decline of nearly 30 per cent in net income last year.

The company followed the example set by BP and Shell with conservative dividend rises by lifting the payout from 15p a share to 15.75p, with a 9.25p final, covered 1.5 times by earnings of 24.5p, a share down from 34.4p.

The shares slipped 2p to 367p, having fallen from 454p in late January after doubts emerged about the company's ability to sustain the strong dividend growth of recent years. Enterprise's position as Britain's leading independent oil company is



Hearne: testing times being challenged by Lasmo after the takeover of Ultramar.

Net income fell from £156.5 million to £110.5 million. Graham Hearne, chairman and chief executive, said results were affected by lower oil prices, rising production costs and reduced investment income.

The average oil price real-

ised was £11.88 a barrel, down from £12.91 in 1990, falling below the levels of the last oil price collapse in 1986 in real terms.

Production rose 11 per cent to 131,100 barrels of oil equivalent per day, including a contribution of 8,600 barrels per day from the group's interest in Elf Enterprise Petroleum, the joint venture with Elf Aquitaine, the French oil company.

Enterprise again added reserves that exceeded production.

Capital expenditure rose nearly 24 per cent to £470.4 million, excluding a further £126.6 million invested in Elf Enterprise. Having had net cash of £28.2 million at the end of 1990, there was net debt of £331.9 million, implying gearing of 49 per cent. "These are testing times for the oil industry," Mr Hearne said.

TEMPUS

RTZ still copper-bottomed for growth

RTZ can be thankful that seasoned mining investors focus on what is to come rather than on things past, and that not everyone believed one broker's forecast that 1991 profits would be down by half.

After the predictable profits setback, in the wake of a wretched year for mining, metal and industrial markets, RTZ shares rose yesterday by 20p to 559p, against a market that was another 23.7 points off.

After a net exceptional writedown of £46 million, net attributable profits turned out at £308 million, 39 per cent down from 1990's £507 million. Sir Derek Birkin, chairman, admits the setback is not pleasing, and says world mining companies are not out of trouble yet. RTZ, however, unlike some others, has at least maintained the year's distribution at 19.5p a share, operating cash flow was remarkably strong and registered only a 7 per cent fall, and the balance sheet and financial disciplines put many others in the shade.

The 1992 outlook for industrial volumes and metal prices, on which fortunes depend, is clouded. Mineral

markets remain nervous because of economic conditions in the old communist bloc, and economic activity in the western world is still patchy. However, with the longer term in mind, RTZ is going ahead with capital expansion plans that include an \$880 million new smelter at Bingham Canyon copper mine, Salt Lake City, and will further expand various other mining operations, including gold. A feasibility study for a \$770 million gold project in Papua New Guinea will soon be submitted.

Just a flicker in world metal prices would have a marked impact on RTZ's profits, which could reach £385 million this year and sail on to £485 million in 1993. The cut and thrust of the British election campaign should largely pass RTZ shares by, and on 14.5 times 1992 earnings, and 11.5 times 1993 profit hopes, are a buy.

United Biscuits

SUPERMARKETS are fighting a price war, consumers are trading down, and when the kids clamour for crisps they are more likely to be given a packet of own-label snacks rather than the up-



Cautious: Christopher Lewinton, of TI group

market brands they enjoyed in the mid-1980s.

Logic dictates that United Biscuits, owners of the McVities, KP and Ross Young brands, ought to be feeling the crunch of recession. Instead UB surprised the market yesterday by reporting pre-tax profits up 8 per cent to £211 million in 1991, £4 million more than the most optimistic forecasts.

The shares rose 4p to 416p in a falling market.

A strong Christmas accounted for some of the extra profits but UB's profits record, unbroken since the late 1960s, is a testimony to management skills and philosophy. The business had positioned itself for the recession.

UB is still achieving growth in the UK, but the real

potential comes from continental Europe, where UB's share, in many countries, is still in single figures. America is also a potential growth market, and UB is investing in eastern Europe and Asia.

Ross Young, the frozen foods business, was the only black spot, with trading profit down 9 per cent to £27.5 million, largely because of a weak UK catering market.

Assuming pre-tax profits of £222 million for the current year, the shares are trading on 13.2 times earnings. Concerns about the problems of the UK market remain but longer term, the UB quality product and management team will win through.

TI Group

WHEN someone as ebullient and positive as Christopher Lewinton, chairman of TI Group, talks caution, the market does well to listen. TI came in below some brokers' forecasts for 1991, and Mr Lewinton gives warning that 1992's performance is unlikely to be marked by any significant recovery.

TI Group's shares fell 13p to 615p as a result, and estimates for the current year were scaled back. Last year

marked the end of the first phase of TI's restructuring under Mr Lewinton's leadership: just a fifth of the current group was in existence five years ago, and the market capitalisation has quadrupled to £1 billion, at which level TI is knocking on the door of the FT-SE 100.

A raft of acquisitions in 1991 pushed total investment ahead from £64 million to £160 million and left the group with minimal borrowings of £37 million, against cash of £52 million a year previously. Disregarding an exceptional hedging gain in 1990 of £7.3 million, taxable profits fell by a creditable 13 per cent to £105 million.

The UK was the worst hit, where profits fell 41 per cent. In the two biggest geographical markets, western Europe and north America, earnings were static.

The engineering team at Smith New Court is predicting £115 million pre-tax this year, putting the shares on a forward earnings multiple of 12.5, while a further 5 per cent dividend rise would give a yield of 4.9 per cent. TI's wide geographic spread and exposure to the American economy should ensure further outperformance.

Election jitters depress share and gilt prices

ELECTION fever continued to dominate sentiment with sterling, government bonds and shares all suffering hefty losses as the odds on a hung Parliament continued to shorten. Selling was again light. A hesitant start on Wall Street, despite a better than expected set of American retail sales, combined with a weaker financial futures market to extend this week's sharp fall in the FT-SE 100 index.

The index ended just above its worst of the day with a loss of 29.1 points at 2,493.3, making a two-day fall of 81.5 points.

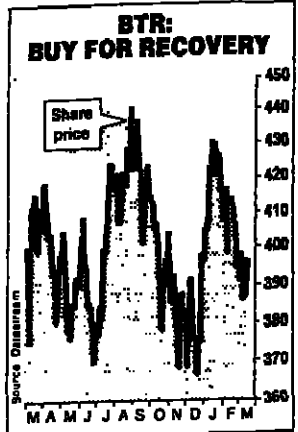
Gills remained weak, still worried by the government's funding policy and sterling's fragility. Prices at the longer end fell by another £4, and among index-linked stocks by as much as £4.

The sharp falls of the past few days have prompted some bargain-hunting, with investors concentrating on the quality stocks that appear to have been oversold. BTR was a case in point, rising 10p to 396p after some disappointing figures this week, with BZW, Yamaichi and County NatWest WoodMac all believed to be substantial buyers. County is forecasting a big surge in profits next year, helped by the acquisition of Hawker Siddeley.

Guinness suffered a further setback, losing 27p to 575p before figures next week with Smith New Court, the broker, urging its clients to take profits.

Full-year figures from United Biscuits put a smile on brokers' faces with pre-tax profits up. The figures were at the top end of City expectations and the shares firmed 1p to 413p, after 421p.

RTZ, the mining finance group, also pleased analysts despite its full-year figures being down. The dividend was maintained and dealers took the view that the group's performance could have been worse. The shares finished 16p better at 555p. But there was little cheer for shareholders in TI Group, the engineer,



down 14p at 614p after reporting a drop in full-year pre-tax profits from £128.4 million to £105.2 million. The setback had been expected, but the group gave warning that there was still no sign of recovery.

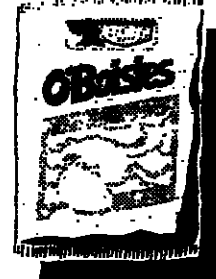
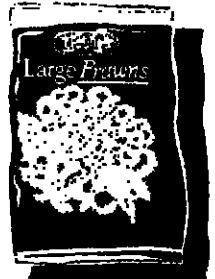
Legal & General was rewarded with a rise of 10p to 377p after managing to stay in the black after another difficult year. Pre-tax profits tumbled from £68.6 million to £11.3 million and the dividend was raised.

Enterprise Oil eased 2p to 367p after issuing a warning that the going remained diffi-

cult. Pre-tax profits last year slumped from £210.3 million to £114.4 million. The group was on target to double production over the next few years.

Trencherwood, the USM builder, fell 5p to 74p with the group giving a warning that there will be further substantial write-offs on its properties and other developments. The group remains in talks with its banks.

MICHAEL CLARK



A good spread makes a great table.

| | 1991 Unaudited | 1990 Audited | Change |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Sales | £2,979.1m | £2,723.6m | +9% |
| Trading profit | £244.9m | £218.1m | +12% |
| Profit before tax | £211.3m | £195.1m | +8% |
| Earnings per share | | | |
| Unaudited | 30.8p | 28.9p | +7% |
| Fully diluted | 29.5p | 27.1p | +9% |
| Dividends per share | 15.3p | 14.4p | +6% |

Satisfactory results in difficult economic conditions □ Continental European sales more than trebled in two years □ Good progress in biscuits and snacks in UK and USA □ Frozen and chilled foods rationalisation successfully completed □ "...the strength of our performance in 1991 gives me confidence that we will again deliver satisfactory profits and earnings per share this year", R C Clarke, Chairman



United Biscuits

The Annual Report will be posted to shareholders on 14 April. If you would like a copy please write to Group Communications Department, United Biscuits (Holdings) plc, Church Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7PR Tel 0895 432100. The directors of United Biscuits (Holdings) plc accept responsibility for the contents of this advertisement, which has been approved by Ernst & Young, a firm authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to carry out investment business. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future.

WALL STREET

New York — Shares fell in mid-morning trading. The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 5.63 points to 3,203. Sharply lower bond prices weighed on share prices.

□ Tokyo — Prices ended just

slightly weaker, pulled back from a plunge in the morning by bargain-hunting and light program buying. The Nikkei index fell 30.26 points, or 0.15 per cent, to 20,561.88.

(Reuters)

| Mar 12 | Mar 11 | Mar 12 | Mar 11 | Mar 12 | Mar 11 |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| midday | close | midday | close | midday | close |
| AMP Inc | 60% | 60 | 51% | 51% | 51% |
| AMR Corp | 70% | 70 | 60% | 60% | 60% |
| Amgen Inc | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen Ltd | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (UK) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (US) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Canada) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Australia) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Japan) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (South Africa) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (New Zealand) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Hong Kong) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Singapore) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Taiwan) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Korea) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (India) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (China) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Russia) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Brazil) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Mexico) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Argentina) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
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| Amgen (Uruguay) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Cuba) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Haiti) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Dominican Rep) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Jamaica) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Trinidad) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Suriname) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Guyana) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Venezuela) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Colombia) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Venezuela) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Peru) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
| Amgen (Chile) | 40% | 40 | 30% | 30% | 30% |
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Legal let down by General

Legal & General thinks of itself as a life assurance company but looks like a composite in trouble. From £2.1 billion of life and pensions premiums, it reported a profit of £126 million for 1991. From £345 million of general, mainly personal, insurance premiums, it lost £176 million, even with the benefit of £42 million of investment income. Only an £82 million windfall from selling its unit-linked business to its own life fund stopped L&G recording a larger loss for the year than Commercial Union, the most life-oriented of the true composites. Management, which has already cut L&G's investment in UK equities, has felt it wise to take a precautionary sell option to protect dwindling shareholders' reserves against the sort of election fluctuations the London market has seen in the past two days.

David Prosser was made chief executive on the strength of the improvements he made to the investment performance of the life and pensions business. He will now have to move fast to make sure that really counts. L&G shares fell nearly a fifth, relative to the all-share index in the year up to the Budget, making them highly vulnerable to a takeover from a larger group that wants L&G's desirable share of the pensions market and can afford to cope with short-term non-life losses or get rid of that business altogether.

That may partly explain the dividend rise, but L&G shares still yield 6.8 per cent and the group's market value is little more than the £1.7 billion estimated net-of-tax value of the life fund, without anything for goodwill. Mr Prosser has already started to wind down L&G's exposure to underwriting the non-life business it picks up when selling life and pensions policies. To date, some 40 per cent has been shed through quota share reinsurance. Losses in 1991 look worse than they might because L&G reserved conservatively against its share of nearly 9 per cent of the mortgage indemnity market. The decks are being cleared but time could be short. Potential predators will surely be running their calculators over the 1991 results with a glint in their eye.

Spend for America

Americans appear to have taken out their credit cards to shop their economy into recovery and enhance George Bush's chances of staying in the White House. A timely climb to sunnier economic slopes would go a long way to push up Mr Bush's soggy scores in the opinion poll and the primaries. The return to growth that is now likely in the first quarter would make his much-criticised arm's length approach to the economy look like the policy of a cool-headed leader with good judgment.

Yesterday's commerce department data, which showed retail sales up a healthy 1.3 per cent in February, on top of a heavily revised 2.1 per cent surge in January, were some of the strongest pointers to date of recovery. Wall Street had been anticipating that the subdued growth seen last year would continue, as confidence surveys suggested. Closer scrutiny of the data suggests, however, that retail sales are picking up on a broad front. Importantly, sales of durables, including cars, were up 2.3 per cent in February, after a 2.8 per cent rise in January.

Mild weather and New York price discounts may have flattered the figures. Even allowing for that, sales seem to be back on an upward track more typical of past American recoveries. The impact of last year's aggressive easing by the Federal Reserve appears to have finally flushed the consumer out into the shopping malls.

The Auf Wiedersehen Pet factor in Britain's opt-out at Maastricht

Wolfgang Münchau says Britain's stance at Maastricht will make little difference to the economy, but could be confusing to industry

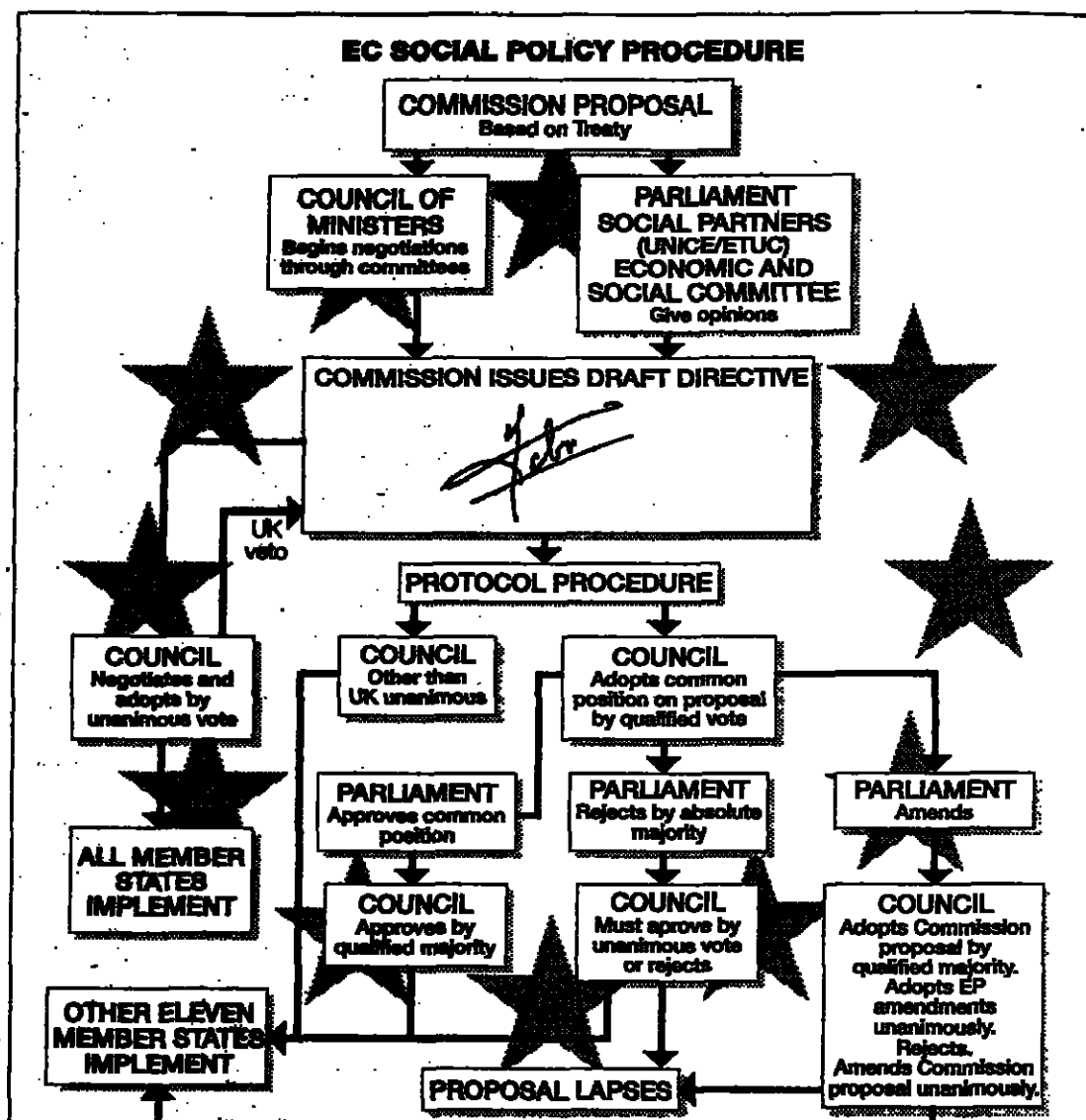
Wiseacres in the European Community have coined the saying that today's row becomes tomorrow's non-event. This was true for the single currency, which until recently was never to arrive in our lifetime and now looks like a fait accompli. It might also be true for the equally contentious issue of a common European social policy.

The agreement at Maastricht, under which Britain "opted out" of certain aspects of a European social policy, was hailed by the government as a victory for the competitiveness of the British economy. More recently, however, the agreement has come under critical scrutiny. The consensus among many of the researchers is that the opt-out by Britain will make little difference for Britain economically, but could still lead to a host of political uncertainties, legal challenges and, worst of all, confusion in industry.

Britain did not opt out of EC social policy as such, but merely out of a specific agreement to extend the EC's powers in certain limited areas. The way Britain's opt-out was achieved represented the ultimate constitutional conjuring trick. Rather than changing the social provisions in the Treaty of Rome, which was impossible without Britain's consent, the 12 merely added a protocol, essentially a footnote, to the treaty, which allowed the others to go ahead and Britain to stay out. This solution raises a number of constitutional and economic issues: whether the agreement is legally and practically enforceable, whether Britain will, as John Major has claimed, gain significant economic benefit by staying out, and likewise whether the others will be harmed by social dumping from Britain.

The government's opposition to a common European social policy stemmed from fears that Britain would lose two of its perceived competitive advantages over the rest of Europe: liberal labour laws and low wages. Also, the economics of social policy is not quite that simple.

The point can be illustrated by another recent example of a social policy controversy, the Labour party's proposal to introduce a £3.40 per hour statutory minimum wage. Depending on who one listens to, this would lead to a rise in unemployment, either by 2 million according to the government, to 150,000 according to the Confederation of British Industry, or 35,000 according to the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. Those in need of a statistic can take a pick. Another intriguing analysis



came from Capel-Cure Myers Capital Management, which ran all the figures through a computer and concluded that a minimum wage will hardly make any difference to the economy one way or the other.

This highlights the difficulties of predicting the practical impact of any kind of social policy changes on the economy.

A minimum wage is about as radical as a social policy can get, in that it introduces a straight-forward and visible labour market rigidity. Compare this with the relatively harmless EC provisions agreed (or not agreed) at Maastricht, which were really about the extension of qualified majority voting in the Council of Ministers to areas that previously required unanimity. These are working conditions, workers' consultation rights, equal opportunities, and the integration of people excluded from the labour market.

Wages, one should note, were explicitly excluded from the social protocol. This is hardly the stuff that would propel British industrial relations back into the Seventies, nor would it even come close to forcing the government to undo trade union

legislation adopted in the last decade.

Among those who have raised doubts about the economic benefits of opting out is the CBI, which said in a confidential report in January that "there is unlikely to be any lasting advantage to UK businesses, if the rest of the EC is handicapped by a labour and social affairs regime characterised by a centralised approach to determining employment conditions".

One might just want to compare this scepticism to the exuberance expressed by a group of senior industrialists and bankers immediately after the summit. In a letter to *The Times*, Sir Denis Henderson, chairman of ICI, and Lord Alexander of Weedon, QC, chairman of National Westminster bank, among others, wrote that the opt-out was "crucial to the economic well-being of the nation and that it must now be firmly endorsed".

On the broader issue of European labour markets, a study by London Economics, a consultancy, suggested that European wage levels have converged significantly over the past

20 years and will do so further, irrespective of social charters, chapters and action plans. "Many factors are fuelling the trend towards convergence," it said. "Increasing mobility of labour, trade in goods and services should create pressure to eliminate wage differentials." This is nothing other than a macroeconomic version of *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*, the TV series about British builders working in Germany. Their exploitation of higher wages abroad represents a classic case of European labour market arbitrage.

Convergence, as such, is not controversial and has little to do with governments. The real difference between the continental and the British position is about whether such convergence should be left purely to the market, which probably takes longer, or whether it should occur within an institutional framework. The same old argument applies to almost any European policy.

Despite the opt-out, two aspects of European social policy remain untouched. There are social policy provisions in the original Treaty of Rome. There is also a far more ambitious social action programme,

which arose from the social charter in 1989. This programme, of which Britain is very much an integral part, consists of 47 proposals by the European Commission, which are due for adoption by ministers by the end of this year. Most of them related to health and safety and are firmly supported by Britain. This action plan is totally unrelated to whatever Britain decided not to join at Maastricht, since the Maastricht treaty will only come into effect next year. Rather than opting out of social policy, Britain is in and out at the same time.

If the other 11 decide to make use of the social protocol, which excludes Britain, this might give rise to a series of legal problems. As the National Institute pointed out in its February *Economic Review*, such a situation could arise if British workers claim that they do not enjoy the same rights as continental workers. This appears to conflict with the Treaty of Rome, which upholds the principle of "non-discrimination of workers". One might guess that if the footnote is in open conflict with the treaty, the treaty wins and the footnote loses.

For multinationals it is even more confusing. One of the most contentious pieces of policy emanating from the social action plan is the draft European works council directive, which came out in its amended form last September. If adopted, this directive would force European multinationals to set up a European works council. Assuming that Britain vetoes the directive, which the government has threatened, and assuming also that the other 11 relaunch the legislation next year under the social protocol, which they have promised, where would that leave a British multinational with branches all over Europe?

Under the directive, a UK multinational would still be compelled to introduce a European works council, even if Britain is not part of the agreement, although the company could theoretically exclude British workers from works council gatherings. Would a company really go that far, especially since there is nothing to be gained by excluding its British and including its Portuguese workers? That is an even more questionable proposition for a non-British multinational with subsidiaries in Britain.

Industry might conceivably relish the idea of not being part of a restrictive social policy regime, but it is doubtful whether industry would welcome the confusion and the legal uncertainty that the Maastricht agreement has created. Even a total opt-out would probably have only marginal macro-economic consequences. But this is not a total opt-out. In the end, the odds must be that Britain will opt back in again, quietly and discreetly. In a few years, everyone will wonder what the fuss was all about, and why the row over social policy almost wrecked this historic summit.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Freeman says his farewells

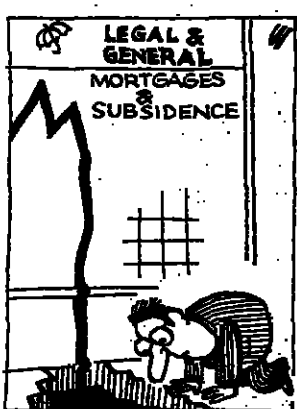
BARBARA Mills, outgoing head of the Serious Fraud Office, joins Sir Gordon Borrie of the Office of Fair Trading, Lord Justice Taylor and 200 other guests on Tuesday to mark the retirement of David Freeman, senior partner of DJ Freeman, the law firm. Freeman started the firm in a room above a greengrocer's shop in Cannon Street on March 17 1952 and, 40 years later, it has built up a formidable reputation in the fields of commercial property and insolvency law. There may be some at the dinner who will wonder where his departure will lead.

Job prospects

NOT only share prices have suffered in the first bout of pre-election nerves. A snap survey yesterday found that one in five London businesses has delayed recruitment decisions until after the outcome of the election is known. Of just under 100 companies surveyed, 44 per cent thought a Labour government would reduce employment prospects for accountants and lawyers. On the positive side, 52 per cent of financial services companies expect business to pick up now that uncertainty over the election date has been removed. Douglas Lambias Associates, the headhunter which carried out the survey, says prospects for professional staff are picking up slowly.

Banker in bloom

LAST month's party to celebrate the launch of Robert



Fleming's office in Johannesburg attracted everyone from Julian Ogilvie Thompson, chairman of De Beers, to Miss South Africa, Diana Tilden-Davis. Robin Fleming, the chairman, and John Manser, the chief executive, and their wives, were among nearly 200 revellers who showed up at Adam Fleming's stunning home in the plush northern suburbs. Guests were greeted at the entrance to the garden by Adam's two young children, Angus and Eleanor, and it would appear that at least one of them has a fine future in banking ahead. For Eleanor was caught trying to sell her posy of flowers to guests.

Winning shirts

THERE is nothing like an election to bring out that entrepreneurial streak. Charlotte Embroidery of Marble Arch, which counts royals and celebrities among its clients, has been running off sweatshirts emblazoned with the names of the three party leaders to cash in on election fever. If sales are anything to

go by, the Conservatives are home and dry. By late yesterday, Charlotte had sold 170 "Vote Major" shirts against only 90 "Vote Kinnock" ones, giving the Tories a clear 30 per cent lead. At £12 a shirt, the sales will do no harm to the company's balance sheet — adding £3,120 in the first 24 hours — but it may be left with some surplus stock on its books. Nobody has been buying Paddy Ashdown.

PERHAPS John Major should have consulted the City's Japanese banks before choosing April 9 as the date for the general election. For in Japanese numerology, 4 signifies suffering and 9 signifies pain and death.

Kwik-Fit knit

KWIK-FIT, the tyre to exhaust group, is trying to repair its image after claims by the Consumers' Association that some of its branches recommended unnecessary extra work. Witness a new television commercial that features a mother, with her baby asleep in the back of the car, coming into Kwik-Fit to have a puncture repaired. The kind fitters are careful not to disturb the child. But, perhaps missing the point, a woman in Edinburgh contacted Tom Farmer, Kwik-Fit's publicity-conscious chairman, to ask if he could supply the knitting pattern for the baby's hat and cardigan. Farmer, who has a personal fortune of £20 million, tracked down the company that made the clothes, and copies of the items will be on their way soon.

JON ASHWORTH

German lesson for life companies

From Professor S.P.L. Kennedy

Sir, The articles by Noel Falconer ("Bark and bite needed in boardrooms", March 2) and Allister Wilson ("Working for power in the boardroom", March 5) raise an issue that is very relevant to life assurance companies and, especially, to mutual assurance societies. Who is representing the interests of policyholders?

Non-executive directors of a life assurance company have a particular responsibility to ensure that policyholders are getting a fair return for their premiums. Nevertheless, mutual life assurance societies have found themselves in difficulties occasionally. Two cases in recent years were the United Kingdom Provident and London Life.

The problems that arose with both these mutual societies had their origins in over-expansion. It is natural for a vigorous management to set challenging targets for expanding the business. However, life assurance is no different from other business; an increase in production requires capital and that capital must come from somewhere. It cannot come from shareholders; it has to come from policyholders' reserves.

What is wrong is to draw so much from the reserves that the existing policyholders fail to get fair value for their premiums. The non-executive director must "bark and bite" in defence of the policyholders.

The solution proposed by Mr Falconer for appointing directors is not appropriate for mutual societies. Although policyholders frequently do have one vote each, regardless of the num-

ber or size of their policies (apart from exceeding a prescribed minimum), they are an unorganised group as a whole and are usually unaware of whether or not they are getting good value.

My experience both as a member of the supervisory board of a German life assurance company and as a director of a British mutual society is that there is something to be said for the two-tier board system in Germany.

The solution I prefer is a statutory requirement for the constitution of the board. More than half the board membership should be made up of non-executive directors displaying the characteristics of effectiveness described by Mr Wilson. The DTI and SIB (or Lauro) should be informed of all new appointments and of the reason for not re-electing an existing non-executive director (normally this will be non-contentious — reaching the maximum age, own request etc). Furthermore, at least one of the non-executive directors should be an actuary drawn from a panel of actuaries, with the appropriate experience, approved by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries. The particular role of this non-executive director would be to ensure that policyholders get a fair deal. He would be known to have this particular brief, which in itself would help to keep a balance.

Yours faithfully, PATRICK KENNEDY, Visiting Professor of Insurance and Investment, City University Business School, Northampton Square, EC1.

Letters can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

Car fleet futures

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The Fleet Show 92 is the biggest and best fleet event of the decade: cars, vans, new ideas, innovative services, fresh concepts in finance, new products, and more.

The Fleet Show at Silverstone is on for five days this month - from Monday 23 March to Friday 27 March.

For those with real responsibilities But you must be a professional fleet buyer, or a responsible manager or director of a company running a fleet to attend.

Free £55 seminars

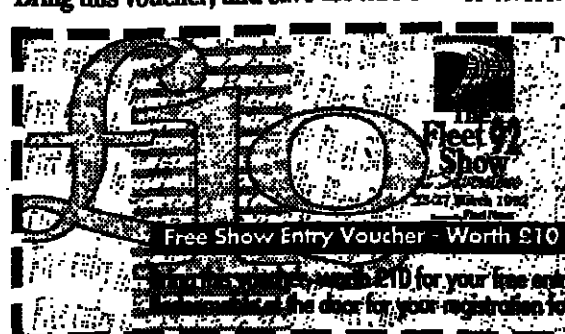
The special post-Budget seminars at the Show promise to be of practical help and interest to every fleet professional. These briefings, valued at £55 a session, are free: just register for one of the four sessions on the day.

The essential company fleet event Make sure you've set aside a day - or two - to attend this once-a-year event.

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The Fleet 92 Show at Silverstone 23-27 March 1992

Douglas McWilliams, of the CBI, argues that next year's Chancellor will be the beneficiary of this year's Budget

Conquering civil servants to control spending

THE Budget was used as the starting pistol for the election, so commentators have understandably paid more attention to its political than its economic implications. However, the smokescreen of electoral considerations has concealed a shift in the underlying basis of economic policy.

The medium term financial strategy, the set of self-imposed targets for anti-inflationary economic rectitude that Sir Geoffrey Howe introduced to much fanfare in 1980, is dead in all but name. The name has been appropriated for the replacement strategy that is based on the constraints of the European exchange-rate mechanism and the convergence criteria set out in the Maastricht agreement for EC economic and monetary union.

The Budget speech tripped lightly over this change. Its extent, however, is spelt out in detail in the *Financial Statement and Budget Report*, the so-called Red Book. This points out that the government is "committed to membership of the exchange-rate mechanism of the European Monetary System"; that sterling "will in due course move to narrow bands... at the current central parity of

2.95 deutschmarks"; and that "the government's policies are designed to ensure that the UK meets the convergence criteria laid down in the [Maastricht] treaty".

Paragraph 2.05 states: "ERM membership will remain the central discipline underpinning UK macro-economic policy in the medium term. Policy requirements are not fundamentally altered by ERM membership: they would be much the same even if the UK had chosen to pursue the objective of defeating inflation outside the ERM. But ERM membership now provides the medium-term nominal framework within which the UK economy must operate."

Strong language, even if there is a continued attempt to play down its implications. Is the Red Book correct to argue that the policy requirements are "not fundamentally altered"? For most of its existence, the ERM has been associated with sluggish growth and low or falling interest rates in the main European economies. Fiscal rectitude has been less pervasive, but has retained its role as a target through its application in Germany, the ERM anchor economy.

German unification

'While the Chancellor has been preoccupied with winning the election, the Sir Humphreys in the ministries have squirreled away most of the loot'

changed that. United Germany is heading for a budget deficit of 6 per cent of GDP on some measures. The levels of demand stimulated by this deficit have resulted in interest rates as high as 6 to 7 per cent in real terms in most countries. Now the optimal strategy for the other ERM member countries who are forced to put up with high interest rates anyway is to try to relax policy by attempting to match Germany in fiscal rectitude.

Those who framed the European monetary constitution at Maastricht were aware of the possibility of fiscal incontinence, even if they underrated how widespread it might become by referring casually to "the Italian problem". So they set out membership rules for the single currency club: public borrowing at less than 3 per cent of GDP and public debt at less than 60 per cent of GDP. These look fine, but they were weakened by the statement that the rules might be applied to plans rather than

achievements and that progress towards reaching these goals might be an adequate substitute for reaching them. So the dog does not have to jump through the hoop — merely run in the right direction wagging its tail.

The demise of a domestic fiscal and monetary strategy and its replacement by the new orthodoxy of matching European practice has given the Chancellor a much less constrained fiscal policy than hitherto. Why then was the Budget so modest, with only a net tax cut of 0.25 per cent of GDP? And why do the public finances appear to allow only £2 billion in total for future tax cuts for the next four years? The straight answer is that the money has already been spent. While the Chancellor has been preoccupied with winning the election, the Sir Humphreys in the ministries have squirreled away most of the loot for their departments. The spending increases announced in the autumn statement mean

that the planning total for public expenditure in 1994-5 is forecast to rise to £258 billion from £180 billion in 1990-1, growth at an annual rate of nearly 10 per cent in money terms and 5 per cent in real terms. It is hard to see how even a socialist Chancellor could spend more.

What seems to have happened is the opposite of the squeeze on public spending that has occurred in the past, when spending was set in cash terms and inflation turned out to be higher than expected. Now inflation is likely to run lower than previously expected and failing to adjust the public spending plans in cash terms would mean excessive real increases. A prime task after the election will be to revisit these unintentionally bloated departmental budgets — indeed a key question that voters will have to ask themselves is which party will be most likely to deal with this and face up to the public sector unions.

The other area where the Sir Humphreys may have had their influence is in the PSBR forecast. My suspicion is that the Treasury mandarins, fearful of a giveaway Budget, have made sure the Chancellor felt his scope was narrowed by presenting him with a PSBR

forecast based on pessimistic assumptions. The forecast for tax receipts looks on the low side, especially since advance corporation tax payments will not have been greatly affected by the recession.

Since I have been fairly critical of the Treasury when the Chancellor has made over-optimistic forecasts in the past I need to be careful in my comments when his forecasts seem to err on the prudent side. But the danger is that the genuine prudence of the Chancellor's financial strategy may not be fully appreciated in the short term by financial markets mesmerised by the £28 billion PSBR forecast.

With the fiscal strategy adjusted towards less restrictive targets, scope for cutting public spending and the prospect of better trends in public finances there is a reasonable chance of reduced taxation in the years to come. The real beneficiary of the Budget may be whoever is Chancellor by the time of the first combined Budget and autumn statement in December 1993 when it has become clear that public borrowing is under control.

The author is chief economic adviser to the Confederation of British Industry



McWilliams: money has already been spent

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BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

FRANCHISES

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Target Products : quilted coats, fur jackets, hand bags, T-shirts, sportswear, hand-knit sweaters, and underwear.

Requirements : - English - University degree - Female / Male - Age between 35-50

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Tel : 852-4110299 Fax : 852-4110299

Applicants will receive an answer within 60 days of their application. Those who can fill out our preliminary requirements will receive a questionnaire to fill in and return, an interview will then be arranged in London. Those applicants who receive their returned application letter should consider their application unsuccessful. All details of the applicants will be treated as highly confidential.

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Further details may be obtained from Professor Ulf Hedetoft, Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies, Aalborg University, P.O.Box 159, DK-9100 Aalborg, Denmark. (Tel. + 4598158522. Fax +4598157303).

Applications - including a curriculum vitae, a summary of teaching and research experience and interests, a bibliography, and publications and manuscripts (all in triplicate) - should be sent to: Aalborg University, Faculty of Arts, P.O.Box 159, DK-9100 Aalborg, Denmark. The closing date for application is 28 April 1992.

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A United Nations translator training programme in English for candidates of African nationality will be held in Cameroon from October 1992 to April 1993. The purpose of this training programme is to prepare candidates to sit the official United Nations competitive examination for the recruitment of English translators/precis-writers scheduled for mid-1993. In the case of successful African candidates, who have benefited from the training programme, the initial assignment would be to the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Candidates for this training programme will be selected on the basis of a written examination followed by an interview. The examination is scheduled for June 1992. The examination is open to qualified holders of African national passports who must:

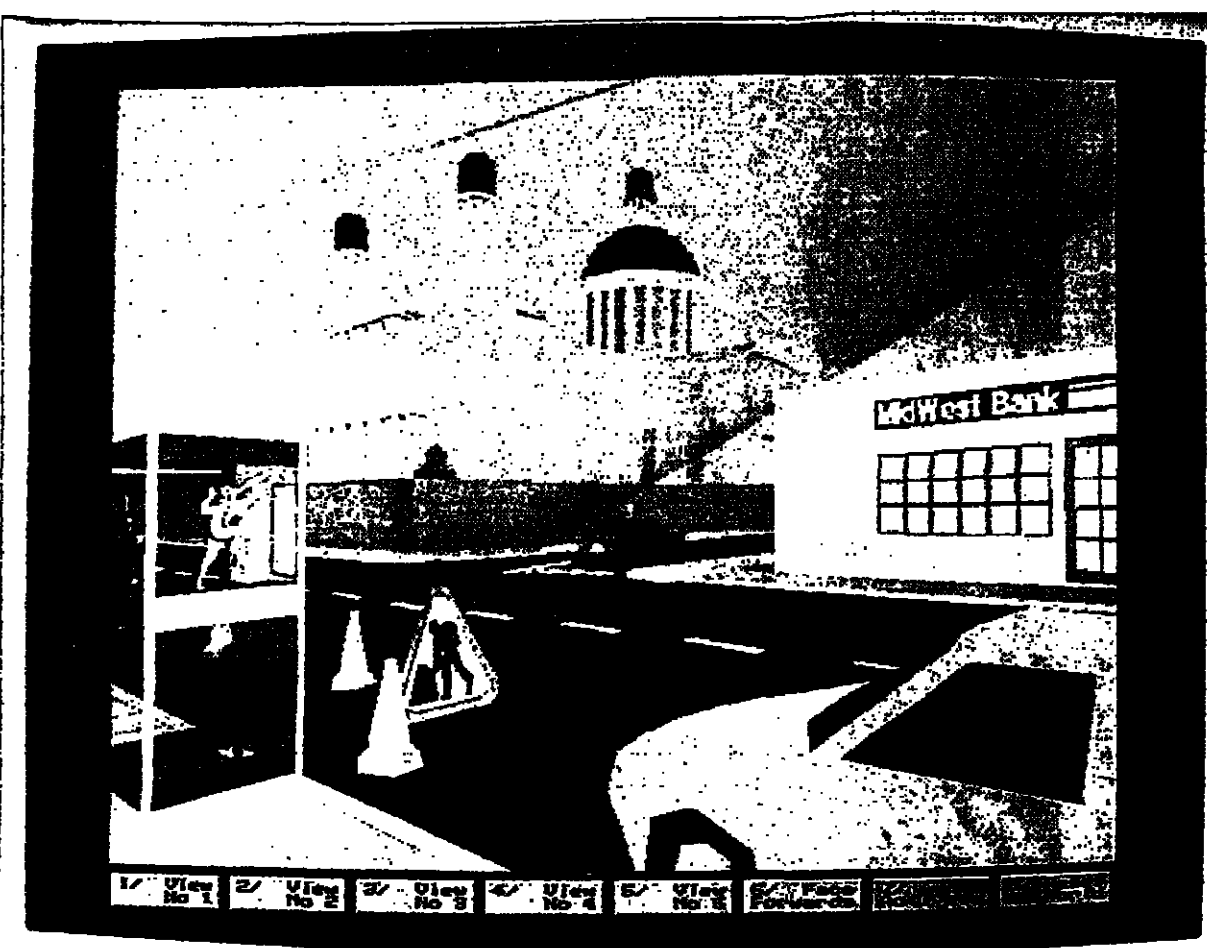
- Have English as their main language;
- Have a perfect command of English and an excellent knowledge of French. They must also have an excellent knowledge of Arabic, Russian or Spanish;
- Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which English is the principal language of instruction.

Candidates living in Africa should obtain the application form for admission to the enrolment examination from the closest United Nations Information Centre or United Nations Development Programme office and return the completed form to the same address or from the following address and return it to the same address no later than 1 May 1992:

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
Personnel Section, Division of Administration
P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Candidates living in Europe should obtain the application form for admission to the enrolment examination from the following address and return the completed form to the same address no later than 1 May 1992:

INFOTECH TIMES



A computer graphic showing St Paul's cathedral, part of a project to create a virtual city. Language students may benefit from such applications by being immersed in a foreign city in which they have to use their language skills

Into the office, via a virtual reality screen

Why look at a screen if you can get inside it? Scientists at several companies have realised they can create a multi-dimensional world of their own, walk inside buildings that have not yet been built and develop new applications by using the technology called virtual reality.

IBM this week announced plans to produce a virtual reality system aimed at professionals, including architects using computer-aided design, engineers designing mechanical systems and even chemical researchers visualising the interaction of complex molecules.

The system, to be developed jointly with Division, will be based on IBM's technical workstation and is expected to boost the market.

Despite its leisure-oriented image in Britain, virtual reality has its roots in aeronautics and space re-

search. Twenty years ago, American researchers began to develop applications for improving the flying and fighting abilities of their air force pilots. Today, the army uses virtual reality systems for tank simulation exercises.

Virtual reality is, however, coming to mean different things to different people. With what might be described as "immersion" virtual reality, the brain is tricked into thinking it is somewhere else. Users are able to explore and interact with computer-generated environments, which are known in the jargon as virtual worlds, and exist only inside a specially designed headset.

Computer techniques used in the latest games are being developed for business use.

Clive Couldwell reports

These much-publicised headsets, which place a small liquid-crystal display screen in front of each eye, can change at such high speeds that an illusion is created of being within another environment. Turn your head left and the images move to show what is on your left.

The effect can be heightened by using special gloves that respond to the movement of your fingers so that you can, for example, appear to pick up objects or open them. These immersion systems are at present being used in research and entertainment.

There are drawbacks with immersion. It is often used for a maximum of only 30 minutes because it can cause "simulator sickness". Obviously, systems using headsets and gloves that send users giddy after half an hour are impractical in the business world.

However, screen display technology is improving and powerful small computers are becoming cheaper. As a result, developers are hoping that a second generation of "desktop" virtual reality systems, providing fast-moving graphics more cheaply, will take off for business use.

The user of a desktop system sees a much crisper image and, of course, more than one person can observe what is going on. Traditional computer graphics animation is simply a collection of pre-generated still images, which are then re-played in a set sequence. Every image takes minutes or even hours to generate, thus making any realistic interaction difficult.

Virtual reality systems can continuously calculate and redraw a three-dimensional model in correct perspective at high speed. Although with normal computer graphics you can create a detailed image, it usually remains static. Ideally, you reach a point where you would like to see your creation come to life and allow you to walk through a building, or to sit inside the car that you have just designed and play around with the controls.

Dimension International, of Aldermaston, Berkshire, is testing a tool kit to convert drawings created in computer-aided design programs into a virtual environment. The company intends to add a package later this year that will allow viewers inside

drawings it has created. "About a year ago we tested the market," says Ian Andrew, the managing director of Dimension International.

"We were saying we would build a virtual world and provide whatever you needed to visualise a new building or the insides of a warehouse but we quickly found that users wanted something that could let them do it themselves."

Desktop virtual reality is also being looked at by education and a handful of companies for use in manufacturing. As part of a £100,000 project, funded by the employment department and some commercial partners, West Denton School in Newcastle-upon-Tyne is the first site for a schools-based virtual reality project in Europe.

Pupils at the school studying for A-levels in design, art and physics, as well as those taking information technology courses, started using the system last month.

The school plans to run three projects. Dangerous Workplace, for example, provides a virtual world based on factory space at NEI Parsons — part of the Rolls-Royce Industrial Power Group and a manufacturer of turbine generators — and will contain everyday workplace hazards.

The idea is that pupils, by creating a virtual world and interacting with potential hazards, will start to appreciate the importance of health and safety training.

Intelligent City, on the other hand, is aimed at increasing the speed at which pupils learn a foreign language, by immersing them in a foreign "virtual city". Pupils will have to perform various tasks, such as finding their way to a restaurant or shop, buying items and using public transport, all within the virtual world.

Outdoor Gallery is more appropriate for sculptors, architects and town planners. Using images based on well-known works by Henry Moore, the project aims to visualise how best to site works of art to the benefit of the artist, the public and the environment.

In industry, Satra, the footwear industry's technological, research and consultancy centre, is spending £400,000 over four years on a PC-based virtual reality system to try to identify better methods for shoe production. Eventually, Satra will link with a second system that times the movements taken by producers making different types of footwear.

The research programme is aimed at helping companies in the industry to calculate manufacturing costs more accurately and so establish more realistic pricing policies.

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| Feature | XEN-LS 1st Series 386SX-16/150 | LS 1st Series 386SX-16/110 | LS 1st Series 386SX-16/111 | LS 1st Series 386SX-16/150 |
| Processor | 16MHz 386SX | 16MHz 386SX | 16MHz 386SX | 16MHz 386SX |
| Memory - standard | 1 Mb | 1 Mb | 1 Mb | 1 Mb |
| Maximum onboard memory | 8 Mb | 8 Mb | 8 Mb | 8 Mb |
| Floppy disk drive | 1.44 Mb 3.5" | n/a | 1.44 Mb 3.5" | 1.44 Mb 3.5" |
| Hard disk drive | 50 Mb IDE | n/a | n/a | 50 Mb IDE |
| Hard disk Average access time | 17 ms | n/a | n/a | 17 ms |
| Hard disk Cache | 64k | n/a | n/a | 64k |
| Serial port | Standard | Standard | Standard | Standard |
| Parallel port | Standard | Optional | Optional | Optional |
| Onboard Ethernet | No | Standard | Standard | Standard |
| AT expansion slots | Three | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| With 14" VGA mono monitor | £799 | £699 | £749 | £849 |
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| 1ST SERIES ADD-ONS | |
|--|-----|
| Windows 3.0 starter pack (Windows 3.0, mouse, 1Mb memory module) | £99 |
| Parallel port for LS 386SX-16 | £49 |

Hard disk response, for example, is the single most important contributor to overall performance and our 1st Series drives, with an access time of 17ms, are typically 25% faster than those fitted to comparable entry-level machines.

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| Dell System 3165X | 1 Mb | 50 Mb | 27 ms | VGA 800 x 600 | £1029* |
| Tandon 386SX | 1 Mb | 40 Mb | 18 ms | VGA | £999 |
| CompuAdd 386SX/16 | 2 Mb | 40 Mb | 28 ms | SVGA | £1048 |

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Windows that opened to a fortune

Matthew May on how Bill Gates, at 36 already the richest man in the United States, just cannot help making more billions out of software programs.

The chances of becoming a millionaire, if the plans for a national lottery announced last week actually come to fruition, are remote. Much better is the odds offered by computer software company, Microsoft.

Through stock options, it has managed to make millionaires of more than 10 of its employees. Dollar millionaires that is, but still a sizeable amount of money and a sizeable amount of power. In 100,000, given the company's work force of 10,000 people.

Paul Allen, the company's co-founder, is worth a few billion, and a senior executive recently retired with shares worth more than \$40 million (about 23 million). Bill Gates, the company chairman and the man behind it all, recently became the richest man in the United States as a result of the value of his company's shares that has made his 3 per cent stake worth more than \$1 billion.

Microsoft is the company behind the operating system used by most personal computers. More recently it has scored an immense success with a software package called Windows 3 that has sold nearly 1 million copies in a little over 18 months, a figure that could double within a year.

Windows is a package that provides like box, graphics and icons that make the screen display of an IBM-compatible computer look like an Apple Macintosh.

Apart from looking far prettier than the purely text-based screens of traditional word processors, it makes personal computers easier to use, which is seen as particularly important in the UK where many users are intimidated by the American counterparts, unlike their American counterparts, still shy of using keyboard.

What is even better for

Microsoft is that Windows does not actually do much by itself — you have to buy application packages to do the particular task you want and new versions are needed to take advantage of Windows.

Though other software companies have been rushing out Windows versions of their own packages, what better, many customers have thought, than buying your applications package from the same people who sold you Windows.

It means that more than half of the application packages sold to run with Windows have come from Microsoft.

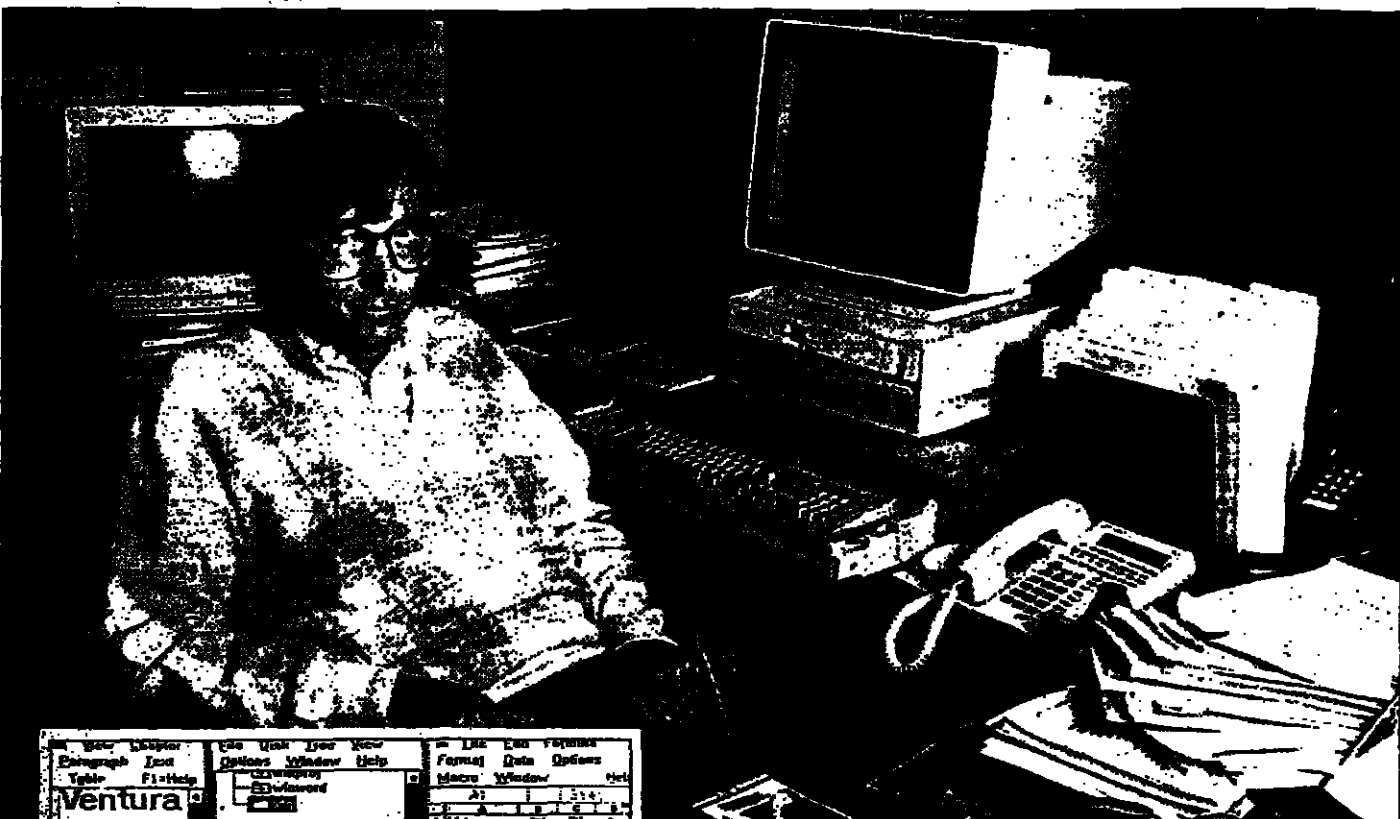
Whether the concept makes personal computers any easier to use is open to debate as people frequently find themselves playing with such things as symbols that let you file things away in little computer representations of filing cabinets.

One writing instructor at the University of Delaware went so far as to accuse such things as leading to "slipshod writing and fluffier topics".

Microsoft though based in Seattle, Washington, rather than the computer industry's traditional home of Silicon Valley, California, still retains much of the usual folklore surrounding some of the computer industry's more flamboyant start-ups.

Bill Gates was just 15 years old when he founded his first company, along with Paul Allen, having already gained respect from his peers for the ease with which he could infiltrate corporate computer systems.

Last month, the US magazine *Business Week* featured Mr Gates as its cover story. The magazine found a chairman who arrived for a meeting of 5,000 employees clad in leather and leading a troop of ten Harley Davidson motorbikes



Billionaire: Bill Gates in his modest study, and (inset) a menu for Windows, the program that led to his success

while the song, "Leader of the Pack", blared out of the auditorium's speakers.

Describing Mr Gates as "rumpled", envious business competitors tend to refer to him unkindly as the archetype computer nerd and "still aged only 36" through grunted teeth. *Business Week* found people in bathing suits at the office discussing software bugs

over a game of volleyball in the hall, and a talented but novice programmer who had already ruffled up \$150,000 in potential profit from a share option.

In Britain, things are a little more restrained. With headquarters in Reading, Berkshire, the British arm of the company employs about 250 people, mostly in sales and marketing. If there are

any Microsoft millionaires in Britain, the company does not want to talk about them. But it acknowledges that those few who have kept stock from the early days must be sitting on a tidy sum.

Microsoft UK's only concession to California, or perhaps it is now Seattle culture, seems to be a casual day on Fridays, when staff are allowed to wear jeans. According to John Leftwich, the director of marketing, about half the British staff have share options that can make a "material" difference to their salaries.

Like its parent company, Microsoft UK is hiring fast, 40 people have joined in the last three months, and Mr Leftwich says the major problem is "the challenge of getting up to speed" as the newcomers are integrated into the

company. Despite its current performance, profits up 56 per cent and turnover up 66 per cent last year, Microsoft is well aware that sitting on your laurels can result in joining another part of computer folklore — the company that is here today and gone tomorrow.

Despite his paper worth, Mr Gates works 15-hour days, like a good hamburger and is occasionally given to firing off gloomy memos concerned that competitors are waiting in the wings ready to take advantage of the merest hint of weakness.

Though Windows 3 is barely a year and a half old, the company has been busy working on a successor since its launch and has interviewed 11,000 people on how they use the package and what they like and dislike.

The results of this and other research will be available from next month when a new edition of the package, or version 3.1 as it is described in the computer lexicon, will be announced.

The company hopes that this will convince the sceptics that Windows is going to stay as the standard for such software during the 1990s.

Priced, like the current version, at £90, it will run quicker, look nicer and be tweaked to cope better with things like portable computers and networking.

It will also be the basis for other products designed to link with pen based computing — where the keyboard is replaced by an electronic pen to write on the screen — and multimedia where there is a requirement to move bits of sound and video between computer files in the same way that text is handled today.

Also under development is Windows NT, a complete operating system designed to replace Microsoft's MS-DOS, which is due out by the end of the year.

Competitors are increasingly worried that Microsoft shows all the signs of dominating the software market in the same way that IBM managed to control much of the computer industry throughout the Eighties.

Microsoft's decision last month to start a scheme that will allow companies to apply for a "Windows compatible" logo to stick on approved products was seen as a sign that the giant software company will not give an inch.

Apple Computer is suing Microsoft, claiming £2.5 billion in lost sales, because it says that Microsoft infringed Apple copyrights.

Another worry is the US Federal Trade Commission's investigation into complaints that Microsoft broke anti-trust legislation in its rise to fame.

Just as driving a car is the same whatever the make and model, customers do not want to learn a whole different way of working just because they buy a new piece of software. To the company that can force conformity on the computer market, the rewards are great.

Silicon neuron faster than a brain cell

Scientists in Britain and the US have created the first "silicon neuron", a tiny chip that mimics the activity of a living brain cell.

The silicon neuron measures about the size of a square millimetre and could, in theory, perform a million times faster than its biological counterpart. Applications include predicting electronic versions of human brain sections and developing miniature robots with the characteristics of simple lifeforms.

The biological neuron, or nerve cell, is one of the basic units of nervous systems. "Brain cells collect signals from other brain cells, combine them to make a decision and produce an output," says Rodney Douglas of the Medical Research Council, who developed the chip with Misha Shomov, of the California Institute of Technology.

"All it is done in an electronic manner," he says. "The silicon neuron's electrical properties are the same as those of the brain cells." A simple act — for example, picking up a cup of coffee — is a complex sequence of events involving millions of neurons.

First, the retina collects information on the cup's location. These signals are

A silicon neuron has potentially awesome powers

passed via the optic nerve to the brain, which processes the information and routes it through the central nervous system to the hands.

Scientists have already simulated the neural sequences involved in acts, such as picking up a coffee cup, but in digital form. This involves generating enormous software programs and running them on huge supercomputers.

The programs are not only expensive to generate and run, but they exist in a computer, not in the real world.

Dr Douglas says: "The neurons we are building are analogues of nerve cells. They are able to operate independently of any controller. They have their own behaviour."

Because the silicon neurons are electronic versions of the real thing, their immediate application lies in brain research.

"We are making a general purpose block of neurons that you can connect to your choice," Dr Douglas says. "If you know the anatomy of a

particular region of the brain, you'll be able to get those chips to run according to that network."

But the most exciting applications, he says, will lie in the area of robotics. Each silicon neuron is small, fast, cheap to produce and uses little power. In theory, millions could be assembled into a powerful artificial brain.

"We're looking at something the size of a matchbox, which takes very little power," Dr Douglas says. "The scientists have already begun to use a silicon neuron."

This acts as an input device for the neuron. Dr Douglas believes that by adding output devices, like artificial "legs", truly autonomous robots could be created, devices that interact with the real world in the same way as biological lifeforms.

Whether their silicon brains will have "consciousness" is another question. "Usually people ask about consciousness," Dr Douglas says. "and I do not have an answer at this stage, except to say that questions of a philosophical nature have a way of changing their meaning as you get closer to reality."

JON TRUX

A new camera system will enable users to tinker with photographs after the image is captured

Perfect pictures



Dissatisfied with your clothing colour (left)? With a CD system, you can change it

100 photographic images.

Kodak says the cost of a set of prints and negatives plus a disc will be around £17 or £18. Customers will be able to take a partly filled disc back to the dealer and have further shots transferred to it. It will also be possible to have prints done from a disc. Philips plans to launch pre-recorded titles covering sports, arts and nature.

But customers will also need a special deck, which looks like an ordinary CD player, to plug into a home television and hi-fi system. The decks, expected to cost between £300 and £400, will also play music CDs and are operated by a remote control handset.

Users will have instant access to any image and can

view the pictures in any order. All but the most basic players will have facilities for manipulating images. For example, in a wedding scene, it would be possible to zoom in on the bride's happy face, pan across a line of guests or crop out the image of a cantankerous relative.

Next year, Photo CD users will also be able to add sound,

text and graphs to the disc images.

"People may select music from a sound library," says Dr Ravi Khanna, Kodak's product manager for the system, "or add their own narration or favourite music."

Kodak is also targeting schools, colleges and commercial organisations such as picture libraries and reproduction houses.

Dr Khanna says: "There has been a lot of interest from the commercial sector but our main priority this year is the consumer market."

Because the images on a Photo CD disc are digital, they can be fed into a computer and electronically manipulated. This means marks can be erased from damaged negatives or a grey sky in a holiday shot can be replaced by a blue one. Electronic manipulation could also be a boon for those who are less than competent with a camera.

At a demonstration this month, Kodak showed how it is possible to remove embarrassing objects from a photograph, such as a telegraph pole that appears to grow out of someone's head.

This may make the system of interest to serious photographers who might not balk at the high costs if they can use it to "clean up" or alter photographs that are nearly but not quite right. If they then have them printed conventionally, nobody need know that a picture has been electronically manipulated.

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Ringling up huge bills

The quickest way to run up a huge bill on a portable telephone is to have it stolen. Thefts of mobile phones from cars have risen to 36,000 a year — one every 15 minutes.

Michael Burgon, a director of the Cellular Users and Subscribers Club (CUSC), says: "I know of people who have run up call costs of several thousand pounds before they've discovered the loss. This kind of crime is now very big business."

Many of Britain's 1.2 million cellphone owners have insult added to injury when they discover that their handset is not insured for its full replacement value, they have no cover for illicit calls made before the theft was reported, and they must continue to pay connection fees to their service provider.

All or most of these problems can be avoided for as little as £12 a year, but the majority of cellular phone users do not take advantage of insurance schemes that are available. "Not enough people take it out," Mr Burgon says.

"Insurance is always optional. We try to push it, but only about 20 per cent of customers take it," Pnio Valenza, a salesman with cellular retailer Comtel Communications, says.

There are many traps for the unwary. Household insurance is unlikely to cover the handset to its complete replacement value,

because handsets are sold below cost as a lure to new customers. The rival network operators, Cefinet and Vodafone, pay bonuses to retailers to bring in subscribers, and the retailers do this by offering attractive prices on handsets.

An instrument usually costs £500-£600 to replace without signing on for a new service contract, but the insurance company will only pay the value of the original invoice, which is typically a modest £200-300.

As soon as the phone is reported stolen, the service provider can withdraw it from use. But household or personal goods insurance will fail to give cover for calls made by the thieves before the number is disconnected. And when a new handset has been issued, and the number restored to use, service agreements still charge line rental for the time the customer had no phone.

CUSC was set up three years ago to provide cover for handset replacement and misuse by thieves. Under a scheme called Cellboc, users have their handset insured for its full replacement price, and gain cover for calls made after the

theft. The cost of the insurance differs between dealers. Mr Burgon quoted £12-15 a year, depending on whether misuse cover is £250 or £1,000.

CUSC runs an emergency line, manned around the clock, so thefts can be reported promptly. Mobile phones have internal numbers — known technically as the Electronic Serial Number (ESN) — which is the cellular equivalent of a car's chassis number. It is the ESN that identifies the phone to the network, while the phone number — like a car number plate — can follow the owner and not the machine.

In theory, the ESN means only the owner can make calls. But even when the phone is safe in the owner's hands, there is growing evidence of deliberate misuse, through a hacking technique known as cloning. Just as computer networks are vulnerable to hackers who can imitate passwords, cellular networks are prey to criminals who can impersonate the ESN.

Opinions differ as to how extensive cloning is. According to Mr Burgon, it may be considered a

fact of organised crime. Vivienne Peters, chief executive of the Telecommunications Users Association (TUA), disagrees.

"I don't think it's organised crime. It's just people working at breaking codes — isolated instances like the abuse of BT charge card numbers," she says. "What I worry about is that no one is actually being caught."

The TUA is now issuing warnings to its members about the risks of cloning, especially when the phone bills are handled centrally.

"What happens is that the user doesn't actually see the bill," Ms Peters says. "It goes in to the company accounts department, and the itemisation is not checked." If individual users within the company can check their own bills, the trick can easily be spotted, she believes.

There is no way that cloning can be prevented, however, because illicit ESNs cannot be tracked to source as a hard-wired telephone could. Any communications network that uses radio is vulnerable in ways that fixed networks are not.

The over-riding problem remains theft. The competition between airline resellers, many of whom are small and speculative companies, makes price the arbiter but users need to be aware that cheap deals can turn dear if they neglect insurance.



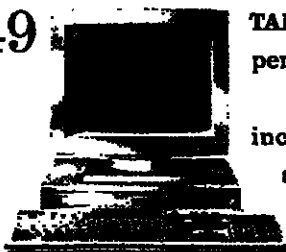
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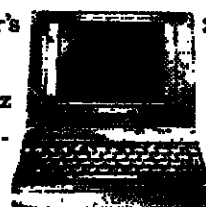
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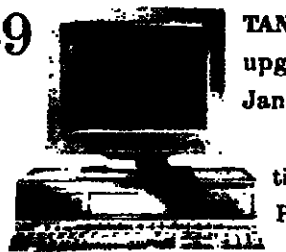
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Portable data

SONY has displayed a prototype of a "personal information device" based on compact-disc technology. The device, which resembles a tiny portable computer, can play special CDs that store computer data. It also plays music.

The company says the device will be available from this autumn but did not disclose the price. The machine is 7-in wide, 6-in long and 2-in high and is an IBM-compatible personal computer with a flip-up screen and small keyboard. Last year, Sony introduced the Data Discman, an even smaller device that plays miniature CDs that contain text and drawings, only, for such uses as dictionaries and other reference books.

Over here

MOST Americans think that their country has been overtaken by others in developing the latest high technology.

Ninety six per cent of 1,000 people questioned regarded high-tech as vital to the nation's future, but only 12 per cent believed that the United States would be able to maintain its leadership role in the field by the end of the decade.

Copy taxes

THE European Court has rejected requests from eight Japanese photocopier manufacturers to cancel measures aimed at their exports to the EC. In 1987 the EC imposed 20 per cent "anti-dumping" taxes on Canon, Minolta, Sharp, Ricoh, Sanyo, Mita, Matsushita and Konishiroku exports to the EC. The initial decision, valid for five years, was extended for a further six months in February pending an EC decision on whether to impose the tax for a further five years.

Car pricing

SINGAPORE has prepared a shortlist of 50 companies wanting to bid for the country's electronic road pricing system that will be introduced in 1996. The system, the most sophisticated of its kind, will require drivers to use electronic smart cards and will identify where cars are

through a series of gantry points and detectors, charging them accordingly. Singapore charge drivers who enter business districts during peak hours by making them buy a permit. The firms interested in providing the technology for the road pricing system include AT&T, Marconi, NT and Siemens.

Anonymous PCs

IBM is to form a subsidiary to sell cheap personal computers in Europe, but they will not carry an IBM logo. Explaining the move, spokesman Michael Reil said purchasers will "get quality product, but they should not expect to see the same type of service and support." The main reason for the move, he said, is that the company sees a large enough market in Europe for cheap personal computers. The first no-IBM, IBM computers are expected until next year.

On watch

A WATCH that will also work as a paging device is to go on sale in the US in August. Priced at £115, the Piepsper watch has been developed by the makers of the Swatch, SMH/Swiss at Mobilecomm. "Piepsper's the German word for better."

The pager watch uses four separate tones to enable the wearer to identify the caller. It may be switched on when the wearer does not need to be contacted, or put into a silence mode when the wearer does not want to be disturbed. When in the silent mode, the Piepsper stores incoming signals for later retrieval.

Mirror image

HOURS after winning £74 million in damages from Minolta, the US firm Honeywell filed a suit against six other camera makers for copyright infringement.

The action followed court finding last month that Minolta was guilty of copying Honeywell's autofocus technology.

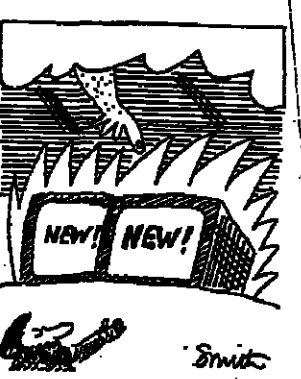
Last week, Honeywell filed suits in New Jersey against five Japanese makers: Canon, Nikon, Pentax, Olympus and Ricoh, as well as against Kodak of the US. The company contends that 14 camera makers are unlawfully using its photographic technology.

Amstrad is to move upmarket

AMSTRAD used this week's huge computer trade fair in Hannover to announce that it was moving upmarket.

Two new computers are to be manufactured for Amstrad by Intel, the leading producer of microprocessor chips, and will be based on Intel's powerful 486 chip that is of interest largely to business customers. Amstrad will also sell a more basic 486 computer that will be made by a Far Eastern sub-contractor. Prices will range from £1,500 to £3,700.

Some of Amstrad's earlier computers, however, are now being sold off cheaply. Crown Computer Products of Lancashire, for example, has just acquired 10,000 Amstrad PC-2386 computers. Sold with Windows 3.1 Lotus spreadsheet, graphics and word processing programs, the package is being advertised



as buy the software for £700 (including VAT) and get the computer free.

The computer has a respectable four megabytes of memory and a 65 megabyte hard disc, but only a mono monitor. Crown is also selling mono versions of Amstrad's PC1512, including printer, for £350.

Amstrad

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THE TIMES FRIDAY, MARCH 13 1992

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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

EC to give the region a share of its super-fund

The release of £1 billion in grants from European Community funds will greatly benefit Nottinghamshire, where the county's most famous son is once said to have practised a similar form of wealth redistribution.

On the face of it, Nottinghamshire seems to have weathered the recession better than many regions, largely because of the wide diversity of industry in Nottingham itself. However, in the northern end of the county the decline of the coal industry has left its mark: unemployment is rising and many small companies that depended on British Coal are being forced out of business.

Welcome though the EC's £25 million grant is, the county council and the other local authorities are continuing to work hard to attract new industry and investment into the area.

A Nottinghamshire characteristic is not to sit and wait for help, but to fight to attract new business and to use any available assistance. To reject an offer from any quarter on dubious political grounds would be anathema to local politicians of either party.

Councillor Paddy Tipping, the chairman of the county finance committee, says: "Our philosophy is one of co-operation with the major companies we already have here and to work closely with the business community to provide the facilities they need and to build up a good working relationship."

This approach has led the council's employee pension fund to become a big investor in development projects in the county, investing in commercial and industrial projects with property companies so that new business has a ready pool of well-designed and well-serviced premises.

Mr Tipping says: "As a proportion of our pension fund, the investments are small, but they are important. They show that we are serious about becoming involved, and our commitment helps to get

A £25m grant is welcomed in the drive to lure new industry, writes David Young in a special report

work started. Ideally, we would like to attract more large investments to the northern end of the county, where unemployment is higher.

"We are working closely with the local authorities to improve the area's infrastructure to make it more attractive for investment."

There has, however, already been considerable success in attracting new business to the northern end of the county.

The most dramatic has been the decision by the Toray Group to build a production facility at Bulwell. Toray is Japan's biggest manufacturer of synthetic fibres and textiles, high-performance films and engineering plastics, which are used in the space, automotive and medical industries.

The decision by the company, one of the most respected in the textile industry worldwide, to come

to the area will not only create more than 400 new jobs but will have a knock-on effect on the local economy.

Toray's choice of Nottinghamshire reflects its faith in the development of the county rather than any access to government handouts. The fact is that every job attracted to the area emphasises that businesses choose Nottinghamshire for its combination of skills, strategic access and the quality of life it can offer for workers coming into the area. Unlike most areas to the north and even some to the south, Nottinghamshire has no assisted area status; companies there receive no financial benefits from the state or tax advantages.

Successful companies already in the area have also played a leading role in attracting new industry by becoming involved in joint-venture industrial and commercial site developments.

Boots, the county's best-known company, and the recently privatised East Midlands Electricity Board are regular contributors to projects in the area set up to provide new facilities for business.

An important role has also been played by the Nottingham Development and Enterprise Council, a partnership between local authorities and local industry, and a similar approach is now being adopted by Mansfield 2000, an organisation that was set up to attract new developments into the area around the county's second biggest conurbation.

Michael Lyons, the county council's chief executive, says: "It is important to emphasise that the picture at the moment is not a bleak one, although it would be wrong to pretend that we have not been hit as hard by the recession as many other areas."

"There are signs that Nottinghamshire could have an auspicious future. Companies see the area in a positive light and there are many initiatives taking place that we hope will lead to new developments and new jobs."

As the pits disappear, a fight is on for the communities that formed around them



Peter Elderton and his room with a view of Trent Bridge: he and his team are now studying the likely effects of new factors

County battles to save villages

12 are operating in the county.

"The decline has not been gradual. Between 1964 and 1970, eight pits closed with the loss of 15,000 jobs, but this was followed by stability until 1980. This resulted

partly from the trebling of oil prices in the mid 1970s. A further 25,000 colliery jobs have since been lost, with the closure of 16 pits, 13 of which went after 1985. There has been an additional loss of about 4,000 jobs over the same period at non-colliery establishments.

"Compared with the rest of Britain, Nottinghamshire has been partly protected from the decline because of the high proportion of its coal used locally for power generation, reinforced by the building of new coal-fired power stations in the county in the early 1960s.

"For 20 years, the market for Nottinghamshire coal has become

increasingly dependent on supplying the local power stations. At the same time new threats facing the Nottinghamshire coal industry are striking at the heart of this market."

Mr Elderton and his colleagues are now studying the likely long-term effects that the power industry's privatisation, increased use of gas, coal imports and renewable energy sources will have on the county's coal industry.

To support its indigenous coal industry, the council has opposed National Power's plans for a gas-fired power station alongside the existing coal-fired station at Staythorpe on the Trent. The council has illustrated its objections by showing Keith Durrant, the planning inspector, contrasting pit communities. Mr Durrant was taken to Bldworth by County Councillor Ray Hilton and shown a

community thriving because its pit is still operating. Next, they visited Langwith, where unemployment and dereliction have been the main characteristics since its pit closed 14 years ago.

Mr Hilton says: "The gas-fired station at Staythorpe, if built, will destroy not only the economy but also the community life of a mining village. We do not want our village ruined just because National Power thinks it can make short-term profits from burning gas."

However, the county realises that the coal industry may eventually be privatised, so it invited merchant bankers to show them the productivity gains that have been made.

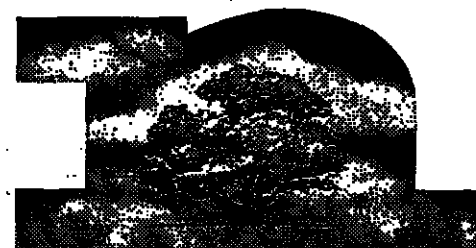
County Councillor Paddy Tipping says: "I want them to appreciate that the coal industry is now a high-tech industry, all because of the skill and tenacity of Nottinghamshire miners. This is not a cloth-cap industry as many people might think, but a highly skilled, highly professional, high-tech investment area."

"Bilsthorpe colliery alone will contribute £600,000 to public services this year through business rates."

Michael Lyons: "initiatives"



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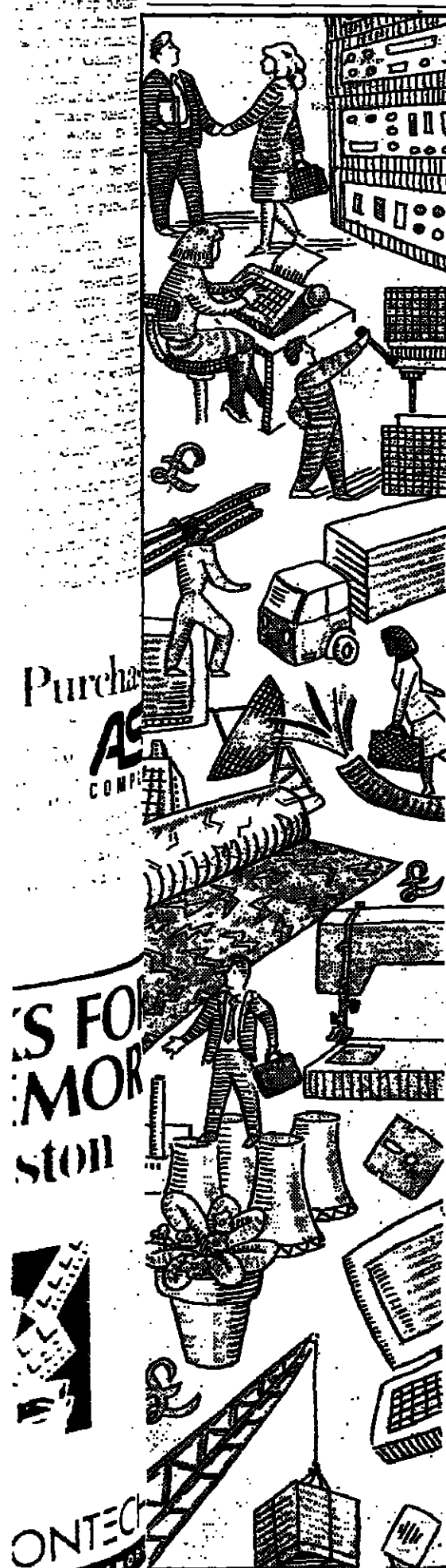
So, to follow Canon, English Heritage, the Home Office Department of Telecommunications, The Inland Revenue, NSK Limited and Toray – all currently on their way to Nottinghamshire – just telephone (0602) 818785 and ask for Economic Development. We'll do the rest.



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City sets itself a challenge

The bustling city centre of Nottingham gives little indication that the recession has hit the county town as hard as the coalfields area in the north of the county.

However, the city believes the development of inner-city areas is important if long-term problems are not to develop and is meeting the problem before that can happen. The city has established the Nottingham City Challenge Partnership and has submitted a five-year action plan bidding for £37.5 million of government funds that would go towards total spending of £170 million to breathe new life into two areas of the city.

Mrs Betty Higgins, the city council leader, says: "Our bid for the Challenge is strong and innovative. The commitment and enormous amount of time and energy that all the contributors to our bid have invested will, I am convinced, bring the government funding we seek."

Funding is sought to create new jobs and improve homes

More than 60 projects are planned to start in the first year, among them:

- 225 residents attaining National Vocational Qualifications
- 62,000 sq ft of new or refurbished commercial premises
- 175 permanent jobs
- 400 improved homes
- 1,100 new trees planted
- 3,700 young people taking part in sport and adventure opportunities

The organisers hope that by the end of year five, more than 7,500 jobs will have been created in areas where at present one in four people do not have a job. The people

behind the campaign emphasise that although jobs are important, they are not the only factor in the regeneration process.

Mrs Higgins says: "City Challenge is about training, decent housing, a safer, more attractive environment and a boost to the confidence of people in the St Ann's and Sneinton areas."

First task for the Challenge organisers is to attract £90 million of private funds to lay foundations for the future economic prosperity of the target areas. To stimulate local business development, a business loan scheme is being considered.

With unemployment high in the two areas, the Challenge will also be investing £6 million to break down the barriers between people and jobs by providing 2,000 training places and 300 child-care places in the next five years.



Confident of support: Betty Higgins, the council leader, says: "Our bid is strong"

Shopping centre cashes in on the best design

The city keeps its character during modernisation

NOTTINGHAM has managed to blend its ancient network of narrow streets crisscrossed with shops with the new generation of covered malls, without creating islands of commercial developments that leave large areas unpopulated during evenings and weekends.

Unlike many areas of the country, the county's property market has been lively in recent months and there are now signs that many schemes classed as "in the pipeline" will be completed this year.

The county council, which monitors property movements, has found activity so far centred on the retail and commercial sectors. Among the large projects likely to appear are an extension of the Victoria Centre,



Ancient origins: Nottingham's retail centre is said to contain the busiest shopping street in Europe

following the 20-year-old development's sale at £10 million. The centre, which provides 550,000 sq ft of retail space, has planning permission for a further 164,000 sq ft in a scheme providing a department store and parking for 850 cars. The

city's other large shopping complex, the Broadmarsh Centre, owned by Postel, is also likely to increase in size, offering 180,000 sq ft of retail space, 200,000 sq ft of office space and parking for a further 500 cars. The county, city and district councils

are now discussing the scheme, which will open a large area around the railway station development. Nottingham is also about to embark on developing a third shopping centre. Guardian Royal Exchange has planning permission for a new

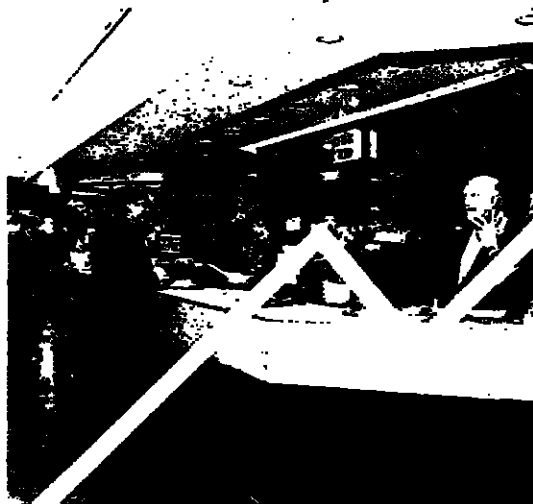
centre to link the Victoria Centre with the traditional shopping streets. The first phase will be aimed at easing pedestrian congestion on Clumber Street, said to be the busiest shopping street in Europe.

Out of town, the Castle Meadow Retail Park, developed for £4 million by Boots Properties, has already been filled by tenants. Another six-acre site is being developed by the county health authority at the former general hospital.

This development and the Corner Pin site in the city are being developed to retain historic buildings and to provide several acres of open space.

On the hospital site, an attraction commemorating Nottingham's role in the Civil War 350 years ago will be built. Charles I raised his standard there on August 22 to mark the start of the war.

Mike Hammons, of PSA, the government estate developers, says: "Nottingham is a vibrant city with much to recommend it."



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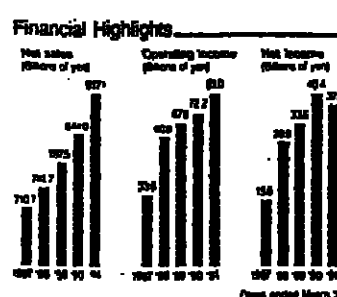
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Robin Hood to the rescue

The county is on track to provide residents with better rail links

Western side of the A1 trunk road, the eastern edge of Nottinghamshire's good north-south communications. However, its cross-county links and its rail services are inadequate for rising demand.

The county is facing the problem and has not allowed itself to be put off by the government's refusal to provide any funding for its proposed Robin Hood line during 1992-95. The line, which will follow the route of the old freight line, will provide a



Full station ahead. Paddy Tipping, not put off by a lack of government funding

regular passenger service from Nottingham through several rural areas to Mansfield. The county has already committed £5.6 million to the project.

Councillor Paddy Tipping, the leader of the county finance committee, says:

"The government has not recognised the line and has refused to accept our bid for financial assistance. Our application was for £3.84 million."

The project will still go ahead, albeit at a slower pace, said and will not affect the devel-

opment of the Nottingham rapid transit system. The parliamentary Bill approving the project has already had its second reading and £2 million has been raised from the public and private sector, more than £700,000 of it from local businesses.

Brides fall in love with lace

Nottingham lace has a special feel that millions of brides have experienced, including a series of cinema and stage Maid Marian.

Over the past ten years, so many Japanese brides have blushed under a veil of lace from the city that Japan's biggest wedding outfitter has now formed a partnership with a local company, providing the ultimate in western-style wedding attire in which they can greet their guests at the traditional matrimonial celebrations.

On her wedding day, a Japanese woman will wear four dresses. Some brides will spend up to £38,000 for the four outfits.

The ultimate is a traditional, hand-made white gown made from the finest materials and the ultimate range is that offered by Dress Black, a Japanese chain that has joined forces with Carousell Embroidery (Pilkett). The new company, in which two-thirds of the investment will be Japanese, will provide dresses for 17 outlets in Japan.

So serious is the business of white weddings in Japan that Dress Black has sent its own production manager to Nottingham to oversee the operation. Ms Yoko Shimizu is working with Peter Gerry and the trained work-force over the next three years to produce a special line of dresses that will be sold exclusively in Japan.

The county council has also provided help for other members of the Nottinghamshire clothing industry and helped finance five companies to attend an intensive two-day seminar in West Germany on how companies in West Germany and Italy have become successful in the European market.

University lures business

Local research skills are a draw to companies

The skilled work-force in Nottinghamshire and the role played in research by the university and the Nottingham Polytechnic are among the factors that have persuaded several companies to move to the area.

Another reason often given for choosing a site in the county is its excellent access to road and rail networks and the growing importance of the East Midlands Airport.

NSK, Japan's leading producer of bearings, has chosen a site at Ruddington near Nottingham for its new NSK-RHP European research centre, which is now being built and is due to be opened officially later this year. The centre will perform fundamental tribology and materials research to develop bearings for aerospace, industrial, automotive and engineering sectors.

The centre is being developed in conjunction with RHP, Britain's leading specialist bearings company,

which NSK acquired two years ago. A £10 million investment programme in the facility and its equipment will enable it to provide crucial support for NSK's European manufacturing operations.

NSK, a leading manufacturer of bearings, automotive components and machine parts, has manufacturing plants in the United States, the Continent, Brazil and Korea, as well as in Japan.

The new research centre will work closely with NSK's central research and development facility at Fujisawa in Japan and there will be a regular exchange of engineers between the two countries, as well as on-line computer access to NSK Fujisawa.

Nottingham University holds second place among British universities in attracting research awards from industry. Professor Colin Campbell, the vice-chancellor, said: "The fact that the university increased its level of awards in the area of research grants and contracts to more than £22.5 million, in the teeth of the recession, reflected the hard work of staff in all faculties."

The university, the most popular in the country in terms of applications from potential undergraduates, has won an award for a brochure to help strengthen links between the city and the campus.

The brochure, which appeared last summer, featured a joint introduction by Alan White, the Lord Mayor of Nottingham, and Professor Campbell, and is designed to introduce the new University Arts Centre to the public. In fact, the judges decided that the brochure was a work of art in itself.

Government's moving gesture

Plans by the government to transfer state civil service staff out of central London have been welcomed by Nottingham and those employed there, once the benefits have been explained. The decision to

transfer the Inland Revenue's headquarters to the city will also give the area a new architectural landmark, once the final design has been chosen.

Six architects submitted proposals for the new offices

in Castle Meadows which will house 1,800 staff. They have been publicly exhibited and the final choice will be made from a shortlist of three, which has yet to be announced.

The most favoured design at the exhibition, submitted by Sir Richard Rogers, won the approval of 37 per cent of visitors and was described by one of the judges as an "uncompromising, simple, modernist submission".

He said the design offers operational flexibility and "encompasses swathes of landscape and waterscape, promising a wonderful internal and external environment".

While the architectural details are being sorted out those who will have to uproot themselves from the South-East are visiting the area and

falling under its spell. Estate agents, health services, transport companies, schools and sports facilities have put on exhibitions of what they have to offer and groups of 100 families at a time have been travelling north and in most cases returning impressed.

Ken and Pat Adams, who are moving from Surrey, have already put a deposit on a house in the Woodthorpe area. "We are looking forward to not having to commute. It takes us anything from 40 minutes to 90 minutes to get to work now, depending on the trains. Here it will take only 20 minutes," says Mr Adams.

Another couple on the move are Dermot and Elaine Callanan, who have two young children. Mr Callanan says: "We are expecting a better quality of life and not having to put up with commuting problems."

The success of the Inland Revenue operation will undoubtedly have a knock-on effect and DTLS, the Home Office telecommunications arm, has chosen a site at Ruddington in the south of the city as its new national headquarters. DTLS will move in next year, creating 110 new jobs, many of which will be filled by local people.

PSA Building Management, the government property agency, negotiated the deal and has predicted more government departments will soon move into the area.

Mike Hammans of the PSA says: "I expect the PSA to announce more deals within the next 12 months. Nottinghamshire has all the advantages being sought by our government and private sector clients."

"It has an excellent labour force and superb communications. Clients are finding, too, that local property prices are very realistic."

Nigel Finlayson, the head of DTLS, says: "Relocating to Nottinghamshire will cut our operating costs and give staff a better work environment."

"Our new office accommodation is ideal. We found the county council economic development unit's help invaluable in choosing it. We will take over the office in August and we hope staff will start moving in from September."

Ruddington Fields Business Park is part of the county council redevelopment of a former ordnance depot, where 240 acres have been turned into a country park and 45 acres developed for businesses. Another coup has been the attraction of English Heritage, which will move its headquarters to the city in 1994. Two possible sites have been shortlisted, one in the city's historic lace market and a canal-side site being developed by the British Waterways Board.

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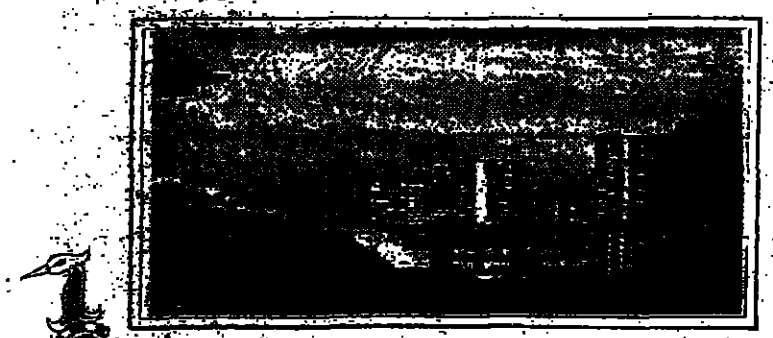
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- Amongst the many achievements are:-
- * Rated number one by school leavers. A survey by the Sunday Times shows Nottingham has 16 applications for every undergraduate place, making it the most popular university in the country. Leadership in promoting regional Access policies to broaden University entrance continues.
 - * Research awards reach new heights despite the recession. Awards rise from £20 million to £22 million, following three years in which research funding had already doubled. Nottingham holds second place for research funding from UK industry and commerce.
 - * Nottingham is a financially strong University. Income and expenditure are in balance at £105 million. New investments of £4.5 million in research and student residential buildings, with support from the University's own funds.
 - * Record year as a Conference Centre. The University's East Midlands Conference Centre has enjoyed a second successive record year in respect of income generated from the vacation use of Halls of Residence and the purpose-built Jesse Boot Conference Centre.

Annual Report available from the Information Office at the address below.

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FROM MEL WEBB IN GIRONA

power and pace of their line wing, Ilago Amako.

Far Over Struy to relish easier task

JAMIE Osborne, fresh from his triumph as the leading rider at the Cheltenham festival, can continue his excellent run with Far Over Struy in the Budget Novices' Chase at Wolverhampton this afternoon. He is a jockey.

The seven-year-old, trained by Oliver Sherwood, has been a model of consistency this season, winning twice and never finishing worse than third in his other four starts.

He was particularly impressive when winning at Uttoxeter in December, making all and jumping well to beat Sacre D'Or, who has himself developed into a fair novice.

Far Over Struy's two latest defeats have been in much better company, notably last time at Newbury where he found Space Fair and Shamama too much of a handful. However, back to facing this lesser opposition, he can resume winning ways.

In the Budget Novices' Chase, Sherwood will be hoping Amour Royal is in a better mood than when he refused to race last time, but even so I prefer the claims of Good For A Loan.

with Always Ready in division one of the Reduced VAT on Bloodstock Maiden Hurdle. The six-year-old has run second to Always Ready, a winner since, in a similar race at Ludlow, and was also a creditable second to King's Rarley in a hurdle race at Ludlow last month. The opposition looks ordinary but Martin Pipe's newcomer Captain May demands respect.

Sherwood's brother, Simon, should also be on the mark at Lingfield with Kimo in the Testes Landover Handicap Hurdle. Kimo has not always looked the most determined customer but he

is in good fettle and can complete a treble.

The Countryweek Magazine Novices' Handicap Chase is an interesting race. Rich Nephew was comfortably outpaced by Milford Quay at Leicester last time but he has a stronger chance here, while the top weight Storm Alert can be expected to improve on a narrow win at Wincanton last time.

However, I side with Way Of Life. He won well at Leicester in January on this trip and his two subsequent defeats have been at two-and-a-half miles. He remains reasonably handicapped on that win and can take advantage of the weight he receives from his two principal rivals.

There is not much between Madagans Grey and San Lorenzo - separated by a length when third and fourth respectively to Beech at Newbury last time - in the BSS Maiden Hurdle, but I feel the former has the greater potential.

At Fakenham, the progressive Va Late appeals as the best bet in the Middleton Aggregates Handicap Hurdle.

He has won claimers at Wolverhampton and Wincanton, on the latter occasion displacing Pollock, who went on to win a handicap, by ten lengths. This step up in class should not be beyond him.



Sherwood: fine chance for Far Over Struy.

Lee can initiate a double

MANDARIN
2.20 Scarlet Express. 2.50 Sanmar. 3.20 Loch Bee. 3.50 Va Late. 4.20 Ebony Swell. 4.50 Sequencer.

THUNDERER
2.20 The Hidden City. 2.50 Sanmar. 3.20 Loch Bee. 3.50 Va Late. 4.20 Another Schedule. 4.50 Sequencer.

Richard Evans. 4.20 Another Schedule. 4.50 Jan Re. Brian Beel. 3.20 Loch Bee.

GOING: GOOD **SIS**

2.20 PENNICK BUILDERS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (€1,648; 2m 80y) (7 runners)

1 6414 THE HIDDEN CITY (C) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 304 SCARLET EXPRESS (C) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 4220 LEVIN (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 4220 TOP IT ALL (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 10 ROMICA MURPHY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 3038 LA PEREY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 535 PRIDE GOLD (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

2.50 TOPCLEAN NOVICES CHASE (€1,691; 3m) (8 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

3.20 RMC GROUP WEST NORFOLK NOVICES HUNTER CHASE (Amateurs; €1,400; 2m 5f 110y) (8 runners)

1 1 LOCH BLUE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 1 POLYOMNUS (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 202 FINAL SPRING (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 202 GARDEN COUNTRY BOSS (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 000- GLENDE BOY 441 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 204- NICHOLSON 383 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 304- CUCK REACTION 504 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 304- CUCK REACTION 504 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

Cheltenham

2.15 DAILY EXPRESS TRUMP HURDLE (Daily; €31,695; 2m) (10 runners)

1 1 CROUCHED HOUSE b or b m Muzzed - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
2 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
3 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
4 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
5 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
6 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
7 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
8 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10

2.50 RITZ CLUB NATIONAL HUNT HANDICAP CHASE (€2,000; 2m 5f 110y) (10 runners)

1 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
2 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
3 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
4 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
5 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
6 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
7 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
8 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10

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3.50 MIDDLETON AGGREGATES HANDICAP HURDLE (€2,301; 2m 80y) (8 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

4.20 DEWFRESH MUSHROOMS HANDICAP CHASE (€2,201; 2m 5f 110y) (10 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

4.50 JEWSON CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (€1,546; 2m 80y) (7 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

Treble for Green Silver

GREEN Silver, trained by Len Lugo, defied an 8lb penalty to complete a treble in the Plover Hill Novices' Handicap Chase at Hexham yesterday.

Ballyford returned to winning form in the Fallowfield Conditional Jockeys' Handicap despite drifting from 7-4 to 5-2 favourite.

Cheltenham

2.15 DAILY EXPRESS TRUMP HURDLE (Daily; €31,695; 2m) (10 runners)

1 1 CROUCHED HOUSE b or b m Muzzed - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10
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8 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10

2.50 RITZ CLUB NATIONAL HUNT HANDICAP CHASE (€2,000; 2m 5f 110y) (10 runners)

1 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
2 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
3 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
4 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
5 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
6 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
7 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
8 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10

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GOING: GOOD **SIS**

2.20 PENNICK BUILDERS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (€1,648; 2m 80y) (7 runners)

1 6414 THE HIDDEN CITY (C) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 304 SCARLET EXPRESS (C) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 4220 LEVIN (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 4220 TOP IT ALL (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 10 ROMICA MURPHY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 3038 LA PEREY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 535 PRIDE GOLD (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

2.50 TOPCLEAN NOVICES CHASE (€1,691; 3m) (8 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
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7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

3.20 RMC GROUP WEST NORFOLK NOVICES HUNTER CHASE (Amateurs; €1,400; 2m 5f 110y) (8 runners)

1 1 LOCH BLUE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 1 POLYOMNUS (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 202 FINAL SPRING (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 202 GARDEN COUNTRY BOSS (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 000- GLENDE BOY 441 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 204- NICHOLSON 383 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 304- CUCK REACTION 504 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 304- CUCK REACTION 504 (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

Cheltenham

2.15 DAILY EXPRESS TRUMP HURDLE (Daily; €31,695; 2m) (10 runners)

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8 1 AL MURAHIB b m C. Green - Dunwoody (15-10) D. J. C. Telford 6-10

2.50 RITZ CLUB NATIONAL HUNT HANDICAP CHASE (€2,000; 2m 5f 110y) (10 runners)

1 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
2 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
3 1 HARRY MARR b m M. J. C. Telford 6-10
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MANDARIN
2.00 Madagans Grey. 2.30 Just A Memory. 3.00 Nougat Ruse. 3.30 Way Of Life. 4.00 Kimo. 4.30 Chance Buy. 5.00 Row Rec.

THUNDERER
2.00 The Black Monk. 2.30 Silver Strings. 3.00 Nougat Ruse. 3.30 Rich Nephew. 4.00 Cone Lane. 4.30 Last Extravagance. 5.00 Row Rec.

BRIAN BEEL
4.30 Near Exchange.

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 2.30 DJEBEL PRINCE.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM BACK STRAIGHT) **SIS**

2.00 BSS MAIDEN HURDLE (€1,541; 2m) (14 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

2.30 LAMBERT & FOSTER SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (€1,518; 2m) (16 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

3.00 RICE AGRICULTURAL MAIDEN CHASE (€2,425; 3m) (16 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

3.40 BALUCHI HANDICAP CHASE (€2,613; 3m 1f) (18 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

4.10 BUDGET NOVICES CHASE (€2,071; 2m) (12 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

4.40 REDUCED BETTING TAX NOVICES HURDLE (€1,541; 2m) (10 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

5.10 REDUCED VAT ON BLOODSTOCK MAIDEN HURDLE (Div 1; €1,625; 2m) (17 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

3.10 INCREASED PERSONAL ALLOWANCE FILLES SELLING HURDLE (4-Y-O; €1,434; 2m) (18 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

1 115143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F.A.S.) (A. Robinson) B Hill 12-0
2 115143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F.A.S.) (A. Robinson) B Hill 12-0
3 115143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F.A.S.) (A. Robinson) B Hill 12-0
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7 115143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F.A.S.) (A. Robinson) B Hill 12-0
8 115143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F.A.S.) (A. Robinson) B Hill 12-0

3.30 COUNTRYWEEK MAGAZINE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (€2,251; 2m) (12 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

4.00 TESTERS LANDROVER HANDICAP HURDLE (€1,702; 2m) (6 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

4.30 FARMERS CLUB NOVICES HUNTER CHASE (Amateurs; €1,419; 3m) (14 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

5.00 EDF STAKES NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (€28; 1m 5f) (10 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT MAGE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
4 5000 R. R. COMMANDER (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
5 5000 SPRING FLY (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
6 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
7 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
8 5000 YOUNG ALICE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10

Seagram still looks to National

LAST season's Grand National winner Seagram remains on course for a return to Aintree despite a disappointing run in the Ritz Club Chase at Cheltenham yesterday.

The 12-year-old, who took this race before going on to triumph at Liverpool last year, had to be pulled up by Nigel Hawke after failing to keep on terms with the leaders.

"We could have carried on and finished sixth or seventh because he was galloping all the time, but he would have lost his confidence," Hawke said.

"Carrying too much weight in this fast-run race was too much for him but he is still on course for the National."

4.10 BUDGET NOVICES CHASE (€2,071; 2m) (12 runners)

1 5882 COUNTRY CAP (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
2 3000 RIDGE A LITTLE (D) (D) C. Telford 6-10
3 3000 GILT M

Lerby's brief spell ends as Bayern appoint Ribbeck

No expansion of European finals

competition.

□ The remaining tie in the European championship qualifying group one between Albania and Spain has been called off because it has no bearing on the final positions. The match was originally postponed last December.

□ A supporter of AS Roma has been sent to prison for stabbing a policeman. A court heard how Massimiliano Diaferi, aged 22, was traced from an identikit picture after trouble at a league match in Verona.

Manchester United should draw hope from semi-final

Yet his sights are still trained on the championship. That Leeds United should fail to extend their lead at Queen Park's Rangers on the same night represented a huge bonus for United's weary squad.



Bidgood hopes luck will hold after Wales recall

The Wales team shows three changes, plus one positional, from the one which lost to England. Biddood's inclusion means that Neil Jenkins reverts to his natural position of stand-off half. He plays his club rugby at stand-off and won his first four international caps there last season but has played in the centre for Wales this year. Colin Stephens is dropped after three matches. Stephens is an instinctive runner who sometimes neglects the other practical arts which others de-

Reward for Scottish players

The trust, seen as a way for the governing body to control

Simon Barnes

Spirit of ghostly crowds is lost on marketeers

The second blow for Test cricket is that transparently stupid regulation for deciding rain-affected matches. This has spelt out with pedantic clarity the truth about one-day cricket: it is a wholly artificial game, set about with fanciful restrictions: rationed overs, field-

Third stage victory for Cinnollini

The week-long race ends on Sunday with an individual time trial up a mountain outside Nice.

Colts give Italians drubbing

Nannini doubts

Motor racing: Alessandro Nannini, whose right forearm was sewn back on after a helicopter crash in 1990, doubted, after a Monza test run in an Alfa Romeo he will drive in a tourist class race on March 22, that he would race formula 1 again.

XXXXXX-1

Weekend decider

WEEKEND:
Dental - 1 - 1

Personal check

Cricket: Derbyshire's chief executive, Bob Lark, will fly to Trinidad in the next few days to check if Ian Bishop, the fast bowler plagued by back problems, will be fit enough to last a full English season.

Mixed Field

Cycling: Ten professionals are in the 80-strong field for the Alexia Essex grand prix road race over 90 miles at Halsestead on Sunday, starting at 11am.

By a distance

Yachting: New Zealand, with an awesome display of light-air speed, outsailed Il Moro di Venezia to win by 5min 1sec on day four of the America's Cup challenger eliminations off San Diego.

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| <p>FOOTBALL</p> <p>30 unless stated</p> <p>Barclays League</p> <p>Third division</p> <p>Blackpool v Bournemouth</p> <p>MM Vauxhall Conference</p> <p>Northwich (B.0.)</p> <p>ENTHURASY SHIELD: Under-18 Inter-County: Wyke v England (at Coventry, 0).</p> <p>WILSON'S OVERSEAS COMBINATION: Northampton v Brighton (7.0); Norwich v Ipswich (7.0).</p> <p>FOOTBALL GOLF LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Northampton v Sharnbrook v Slegg (over 145).</p> <p>RUGBY LEAGUE</p> <p>WARRINGERS ALLIANCE CUP: (7.30 unless stated): Semi-finals: Widnes v Wigan; Wigan v Leeds. First division: Widnes v Wigan; Wigan v Leeds. Second division: C. Third division: Huddersfield v Scarborough; Scarborough v Rochdale.</p> <p>OTHER SPORT</p> <p>BILLIARDS: UK championship (7.30 unless stated): English women's national championship (Staveley).</p> | <p>ATHLETICS</p> <p>PIRATES: Athlete 82 International Indoor meeting: March 20th: A. Borge (Australia), 55.5sec, 500m; 1.40min, 800m; 4.10min, 1500m; 14.45min, 5000m; 32.00min, 10000m; 1.00.00min, 15000m; 1.58.00min, 20000m; 2.58.00min, 30000m; 4.03.44min, 3.1 Chivers (New Zealand), 3.83.57, 5000m; 1.5.40min, 10000m; 2.58.00min, 15000m; 4.03.44min, 20000m; 5.10.00min, 25000m; 6.10.00min, 30000m; 7.10.00min, 35000m; 8.10.00min, 40000m; 9.10.00min, 45000m; 10.10.00min, 50000m; 11.10.00min, 55000m; 12.10.00min, 60000m; 13.10.00min, 65000m; 14.10.00min, 70000m; 15.10.00min, 75000m; 16.10.00min, 80000m; 17.10.00min, 85000m; 18.10.00min, 90000m; 19.10.00min, 95000m; 20.10.00min, 100000m; 21.10.00min, 105000m; 22.10.00min, 110000m; 23.10.00min, 115000m; 24.10.00min, 120000m; 25.10.00min, 125000m; 26.10.00min, 130000m; 27.10.00min, 135000m; 28.10.00min, 140000m; 29.10.00min, 145000m; 30.10.00min, 150000m; 31.10.00min, 155000m; 32.10.00min, 160000m; 33.10.00min, 165000m; 34.10.00min, 170000m; 35.10.00min, 175000m; 36.10.00min, 180000m; 37.10.00min, 185000m; 38.10.00min, 190000m; 39.10.00min, 195000m; 40.10.00min, 200000m; 41.10.00min, 205000m; 42.10.00min, 210000m; 43.10.00min, 215000m; 44.10.00min, 220000m; 45.10.00min, 225000m; 46.10.00min, 230000m; 47.10.00min, 235000m; 48.10.00min, 240000m; 49.10.00min, 245000m; 50.10.00min, 250000m; 51.10.00min, 255000m; 52.10.00min, 260000m; 53.10.00min, 265000m; 54.10.00min, 270000m; 55.10.00min, 275000m; 56.10.00min, 280000m; 57.10.00min, 285000m; 58.10.00min, 290000m; 59.10.00min, 295000m; 60.10.00min, 300000m; 61.10.00min, 305000m; 62.10.00min, 310000m; 63.10.00min, 315000m; 64.10.00min, 320000m; 65.10.00min, 325000m; 66.10.00min, 330000m; 67.10.00min, 335000m; 68.10.00min, 340000m; 69.10.00min, 345000m; 70.10.00min, 350000m; 71.10.00min, 355000m; 72.10.00min, 360000m; 73.10.00min, 365000m; 74.10.00min, 370000m; 75.10.00min, 375000m; 76.10.00min, 380000m; 77.10.00min, 385000m; 78.10.00min, 390000m; 79.10.00min, 395000m; 80.10.00min, 400000m; 81.10.00min, 405000m; 82.10.00min, 410000m; 83.10.00min, 415000m; 84.10.00min, 420000m; 85.10.00min, 425000m; 86.10.00min, 430000m; 87.10.00min, 435000m; 88.10.00min, 440000m; 89.10.00min, 445000m; 90.10.00min, 450000m; 91.10.00min, 455000m; 92.10.00min, 460000m; 93.10.00min, 465000m; 94.10.00min, 470000m; 95.10.00min, 475000m; 96.10.00min, 480000m; 97.10.00min, 485000m; 98.10.00min, 490000m; 99.10.00min, 495000m; 100.10.00min, 500000m; 101.10.00min, 505000m; 102.10.00min, 510000m; 103.10.00min, 515000m; 104.10.00min, 520000m; 105.10.00min, 525000m; 106.10.00min, 530000m; 107.10.00min, 535000m; 108.10.00min, 540000m; 109.10.00min, 545000m; 110.10.00min, 550000m; 111.10.00min, 555000m; 112.10.00min, 560000m; 113.10.00min, 565000m; 114.10.00min, 570000m; 115.10.00min, 575000m; 116.10.00min, 580000m; 117.10.00min, 585000m; 118.10.00min, 590000m; 119.10.00min, 595000m; 120.10.00min, 600000m; 121.10.00min, 605000m; 122.10.00min, 610000m; 123.10.00min, 615000m; 124.10.00min, 620000m; 125.10.00min, 625000m; 126.10.00min, 630000m; 127.10.00min, 635000m; 128.10.00min, 640000m; 129.10.00min, 645000m; 130.10.00min, 650000m; 131.10.00min, 655000m; 132.10.00min, 660000m; 133.10.00min, 665000m; 134.10.00min, 670000m; 135.10.00min, 675000m; 136.10.00min, 680000m; 137.10.00min, 685000m; 138.10.00min, 690000m; 139.10.00min, 695000m; 140.10.00min, 700000m; 141.10.00min, 705000m; 142.10.00min, 710000m; 143.10.00min, 715000m; 144.10.00min, 720000m; 145.10.00min, 725000m; 146.10.00min, 730000m; 147.10.00min, 735000m; 148.10.00min, 740000m; 149.10.00min, 745000m; 150.10.00min, 750000m; 151.10.00min, 755000m; 152.10.00min, 760000m; 153.10.00min, 765000m; 154.10.00min, 770000m; 155.10.00min, 775000m; 156.10.00min, 780000m; 157.10.00min, 785000m; 158.10.00min, 790000m; 159.10.00min, 795000m; 160.10.00min, 800000m; 161.10.00min, 805000m; 162.10.00min, 810000m; 163.10.00min, 815000m; 164.10.00min, 820000m; 165.10.00min, 825000m; 166.10.00min, 830000m; 167.10.00min, 835000m; 168.10.00min, 840000m; 169.10.00min, 845000m; 170.10.00min, 850000m; 171.10.00min, 855000m; 172.10.00min, 860000m; 173.10.00min,</p> |
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ART
Modernism
that Hitler
ruthlessly
attacked



LIFE & TIMES

FRIDAY MARCH 13 1992



HEALTH
The joy of
giving birth in
the comfort of
your bath

Coping with life, from bed to verse

DENZIL MCNEELANCE

Best-selling poetry is
a contradiction
in terms, unless the
poet happens to be
the wise, witty
and bitter-sweet
Wendy Cope

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



Make light of it if you wish, it's only poetry, and by a woman at that. Wendy Cope's new volume is called *Serious Concerns*, but what do these concerns—love and sex and death—matter in an election-frenzied Budget week?

And what do poets know of budgets? They barely earn a crust. A best-selling poet is a contradiction in terms. But of the handful we have—Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, Cope—it is Ms Cope who is in danger (because her poems are the soul of brevity and clarity and, though often sad and tinged with malice, full of charm) of becoming as truly popular as Sir John Betjeman. The solemnities of earnest criticism die on the lips, as one male critic found when he wrote in *The Spectator*: "She is witty and unpretentious, which is both her strength and her limitation." Upon which Ms Cope seized her pen and wrote:

*I'm going to try and overcome my limitation—
Away with sloth!
Now should I work at being less witty? Or more pretentious?
Or both?*

The same hapless fellow said that she "wrote to amuse." "Write to amuse," she says, "What an appalling suggestion! I write to make people anxious and miserable and to worsen their digestion." So much for women poets being a soft touch.

Her first collection, in 1986, was called *Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis*, a bold move since she had never, at the time, met him, a man not hard to vex. It was I who brazenly rang him on her behalf, to find out what he thought of her stuff. Luckily he thought it bloody good. He admired her adherence to traditional metres ("She might never have heard of Ezra Pound," he said approvingly) and, to her amazement, turned up to her launch party.

Six years on, Ms Cope has found fame. She is aired on Radio 4's *Kaleidoscope* and in *Cosmopolitan*, she reads her work aloud in bookshops, where queues form. *Making Cocoa* sold 40,000 copies, and Faber's *Serious Concerns* (£12.99, £4.99 paperback) to itself. The only place to catch her this week, between public appearances, was at the house of her analyst, the apocryphally named Arthur S. Couch.

Waiting outside Mr Couch's house, I feel a poem coming on myself. I sit in the rain in my familymobile (crumpled crisp packets, homework books trampled underfoot) waiting for the poet. Ms Cope's white Mini (a single girl's dashabout car) is alongside, in the poshest street in Hampstead, where only stars and shrinks can afford to dwell. A burglar alarm rings in the house next door. Ignored. I listen to the Chancellor speaking of incentives and consumer demand, and read Ms Cope's lines about lost love and hopeless men.

When she appears she looks wan and anxious, despite her hour on Arthur's couch. The photographer says the light is terrible (it always is) so we go to the garden of Keats's

house. In this garden, one spring morning in 1819, Keats wrote "Ode to a Nightingale". Today, no songbird "poured forth its soul abroad in ecstasy". But there was a carpet of crocuses under Ms Cope's lightly shod feet, until she was firmly told to keep off the grass.

Keats was her favourite poet when she was 14 and first read "The Eve of St Agnes", so sexy and beautiful, Madeline lying in the chill moonlight dreaming of love. Keats wrote that in this house, too. Ms Cope is pleased that Sir Kingsley once said that anyone with any feeling for poetry will have loved Keats best at some time. What Sir Kingsley actually wrote was: "No one who has never thought him the greatest poet in the world, for no matter how brief a period, has any real feeling for literature."

But this was a 1970 postscript to his 1957 essay in which he had sneered at Keats's "O Poesy" attitudes, his bards, pards and Muses, and "that sugary erotic extravaganzas." "The Eve of St Agnes" which has inspired countless legions of adolescents to maul on about lines throbbing with imagination.

But from juvenile enthusiasms crisp modern poets develop, and Ms Cope is adept at parodying "O Poesy", or anything else.

Six years ago, she still had her day job as Miss Cope, music teacher in a primary school down the Old Kent Road, in London. She decided that if her book reprinted she would give in her notice, and did. Then the telephone started ringing and, though conscious of her good fortune, she found they wanted too much: could she fly to Leeds each week and read a topical poem on the air? A wise friend told her: never write poems for money. Do other things for money, and write the poems you want. So she did television reviews, which nearly killed all desire to watch television, and only wrote to order on occasion, as in her "19th Christmas poem".

*Big deal. Big chance
To sell them a rhyme.
They never publish poetry
Except at Christmas-time.*

Six years strikes me as a long time between slim volumes, but she points out that A.E. Housman waited 26 years. She has a thing about Housman (and has already chosen the "Lines from 'A Shropshire Lad'" she wants read at her funeral).

*I think I am in love with A.E. Housman
Which puts me in a worse-than-usual fix
No woman ever stood a chance
with Housman
And he's been dead since 1936.*

She stipulates, absurdly, that there must be no questions about her private life. But who needs to ask? Like Dorothy Parker's, hers is an open book. See "Bloody Men", the first poem in the new book. There are several more in the same wistful vein, about men who prove to be not what they at first seemed.

"What we've got in common", Ms Cope says, "is ambivalence about men." Her upbringing was in middle-class Bedfordshire, in London, but she was sent away to a Methodist boarding school at seven. At the age of nine she was taken by her evangelical mother to a Billy Graham meeting, and responded to his call. Arriving at Oxford to read history she had OICCU (pronounced Oikyou, the university's Christian union) knocking at her door to join a Bible meeting. But she soon dropped them. "When they started praying for the nurse in our college to see the error of their ways, that was the final straw." Now she avoids all happy-clappy churches, and only goes if she can be sure of hearing Cranmer's prayer book.

She was also, unimaginably, 13 stone, but a nice doctor gave her speed: in the sixties, any doctor who gave amphetamines for slimming purposes was regarded as "nice". "I thought when I got to nine stone the world would be at my feet," she says. "But it wasn't."

Bloody Men

Bloody men are like bloody buses—
You wait for about a year
And as soon as one approaches your stop
Two or three others appear.

You look at them flashing their indicators,
Offering you a ride.
You're trying to read the destinations.
You haven't much time to decide.

If you make a mistake, there is no turning back.
Jump off and you'll stand there and gaze
While the cars and the taxis and lorries go by
And the minutes, the hours, the days.

She is still nine stone, and though the world is at her feet, she still needs Mr Couch and her anti-nicotine chewing gum, and she frets excessively about what her mother will think, despite being 46, quite old enough to do as she likes.

Her younger sister, who joined a female punk band called Moral Lepers and is now a disc jockey in Toronto, has made her escape. (The poem "For My Sister, Emigrating", says: "We've grown up struggling, frightened that the family would drown us..."). So there is plenty for Mr Couch to deal with here.

The solitary poet misses the companionship of school, and the funniness of the children. "When I was a young teacher I didn't have a television set," she once wrote. "My pupils felt sorry for me. 'Miss,' said one kindly eight-year-old, 'if you got a job, you could save up and buy a telly.' I was so touched I didn't have the heart to explain that I had a job already." From teaching children to be musically creative, she began to write herself. It is no coincidence that so many poets are teachers. Now she travels, expenses paid, to international poetry festivals in Toronto, Tel Aviv, Rotterdam and Macedonia. At workshops and seminars she teaches others to

express themselves in poetry, where once she was taught herself. I was struck that all the women finalists in the Arvon poetry competition, won this week by Jacqueline Brown, had either attended writing courses, or tutored them. Ms Cope has both taught, and been taught at. Arvon courses in Devon. She taught poetry in Wales last summer, and this summer will go back to learn short-story writing. As is evident from the vast numbers of envious poetry competitions attract masses of people

appeal; they respect her mastery of metre, and her willingness to use arcane forms, as Parker did too (subtitled her "Rondeau Redoublé", "and hardly worth the trouble at that").

From "There are so Many Kinds of Awful Men", in her last book (which echoed Robert Graves's "Why have so many lovely, gifted girls married impossible men?") she now moves on to a more melancholy middle-aged perspective.

*When you're a spinster of forty,
You're reduced to considering bids
From husbands inclined to be naughty
And divorcees obsessed with their kids...*

So they come and go, the drinking ones, the married ones, the occasional one who is kind, or "almost human". When she's let down (again) friends say oh well, you can write a poem about it. At first she feared that by being psychoanalysed she might become too sane to write. "But no, luckily I'm neurotic enough to get by." She still lives alone in South London, with piano and Roger Bear, the teddy (the only touch of whimsy I detect in an otherwise briskly efficient life, portrayed on the cover of this book by Foy Simmonds, reading T.S. Eliot's *Towards a Definition of Culture*).

Does she ever feel she ought to be writing about more important matters in a world full of terror? Yes. She considered writing of the Gulf war, for instance, when moved by the sight of the retreating Iraqis bombed in their vehicles. "But I would have felt like a vulture, somehow. I resist writing about something because you feel you ought to. I was very moved, but so was everyone who saw it on television, and if everyone sees it on television, who needs a poem? I don't have a special response."

"I couldn't write television reviews of the news bulletins about Enniskillen or the King's Cross fire. I'm not saying it's better to do what I do. But I do think that human happiness, and relationships, and love, are important subjects."

Quite. We need all the lightness we can get. As Gavin Ewart said,

good light verse is better than bad heavy verse; or any heavy verse, come to that. What is read in quantity matters: if Ms Cope sells, we should know why. What appears trifling (two silly lines on a dead cat) and satirical, like the cricketer metaphor she makes out of Hamlet, Lear and Paradise Lost is leavened by sombre, moving poems like the one about her late grandmother, ending with "those last bewildered weeks", reflecting what oft was thought.

Male poets, as she once wrote, she used to imagine were "mad, bad and dangerous to know": until she met a few, and found that most of them were "as wicked as a ginseng tonic, and wild as pension plans." Now she goes further: apart from having invented a painful old soak poet called Jason Strungell, she mocks the male poets' collective inability to keep accounts, drive a car or read a map, able only to find their way to the bar.

Can they forgive her? It seems so. She was lavishly reviewed by Peter Porter, a poet she parodied before: he called her "seriously funny and lightly touching... much more than a stand-up comedian working in rhyme and metre."

If today's light-verse writers appear to take themselves too seriously, he said, why not? "Their work has to be as true to common experience and as memorable as anything more vaudeville..." (Vaudeville means prophetic, oracular).

Her fellow poet Vicki Feaver, an Arvon runner-up, points out that Stevie Smith insisted that women poets did not have to be kind, or nice, or sweet; but only clear, and fierce. And in touch with life's little ironies. As the Chancellor might have said, nothing matters but death and taxes: it's in the rest of life that sometimes people find a witty quatrain can help them cope.

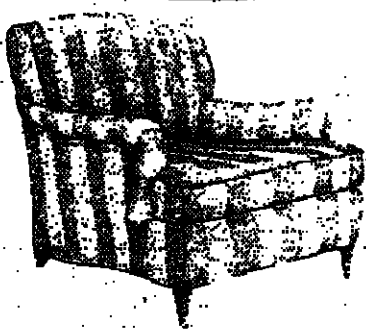
INSIDE

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Arts | 2,3 |
| Modern Times | 4 |
| Health | 5,6 |
| Motoring | 7 |
| Law Report | 8 |
| TV, radio | 10 |

TOMORROW
Your guide to British festivals



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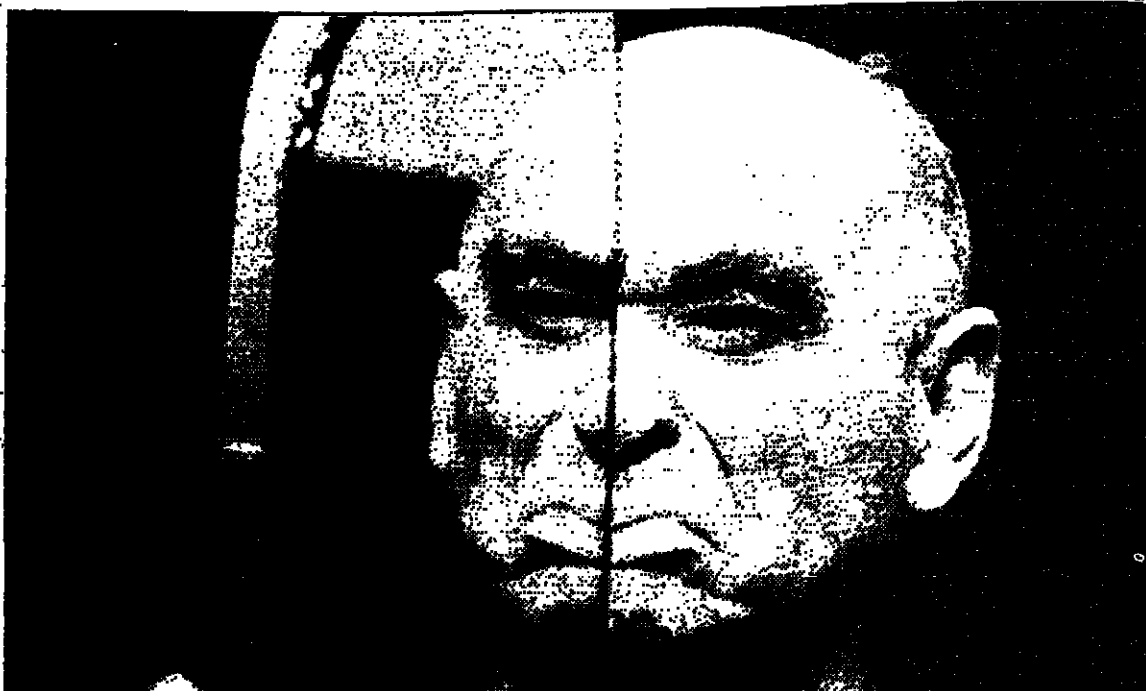
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THEATRE

Talk about garrulous company

DONALD COOPER



On reflection: Ken Campbell uses a mirror to conjure up yet another character in his one-man show

Pigsport
Riverside Studios

THE dividing line between the irresistible storyteller Scheherazade and the prolix saloon-bar bore has never seemed so perilously fine as in this two-and-a-half-hour monologue by Ken Campbell. At his best, the cult comic defies categorisation, ranging through precariously-linked topics, making sideways intellectual leaps juxtaposing subjects with a logic, bizarre but unassailable, that recalls Lewis Carroll's surrealism — only to loop the loop, conversationally speaking, and return inexorably to the point. Put in musical terms, Campbell rambles through variations in distant keys before triumphantly recapitulating his theme.

The first half of his new string of anecdotes and quirky philosophical observations shows him at his best. Against the background of a study — desk, globe, books, figurines, ranged against a black curved wall, he launches into reminiscences that take us a schoolboy's awareness of God (situated somewhere in the stomach) and his first job in Colchester before fiction, unperceived, sneaks up on us. He draws parallels between an episode of his early life and the horror film *The Exorcist*.

From then on, apparent autobiography gleams with facets of fantasy: a magic wand bought at a mind and body exhibition that produced tickets for a sold-out Bob Dylan concert; an actor's college cheer as "legendary status quality" which he left the room; the stage would look somehow fuller.

and who was ordered, by a dream, to attend every live performance by Ken Dodd for a year; and a digression into the piddling-English dirty limericks which brought him fame among the Solomon Islanders.

So far so good: a rich ramble bristling with tangents but never out of control. When Campbell illustrates the different characters hinted at by his two profiles, baptised Elsie and "the spanking squire", one can only

(again) and rabbits, seemed self-indulgent and interminable. Most solo shows depend on the performer's condition from night to night. I am prepared to believe on a good evening Campbell can hold an audience in the palm of his hand. On a bad one Scheherazade is replaced by the insistent loquacity of a beady-eyed Ancient Mariner.

MARTIN HOYLE

2 ARTS

THE HIRED MAN: One-night-only performance of Malvern Bragg's musical, written with the composer Howard Goodall (who also supplied the music for the recent BBC TV adaptation of Bragg's *A Time to Dance*). First staged at the Astoria in 1984, the current version features the cast from that production with the addition of Glenda Jackson as narrator. The evening is in aid of cancer charities. Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1 (01-434 0509), Sun, 7.30pm.

MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF EXPRESSIONISM: The BBC Philharmonic Orchestra's programme is a recreation of the notorious Vienna "Schandakunst" of March 31, 1913, includes music by Mahler (see page 3), Zemlin (Mahler's songs), Schoenberg (First Chamber Symphony), Berg (Afternoon Music) and Mahler (Mahler's songs). The Berg provoked scuffles at the time and the concert was abandoned before the Mahler could be played. This time, Matthias Bamert will probably conduct to the very end. Free Trade Hall, Peter Street, Manchester (01-634 1172), tonight, 7.30pm.

SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA: The SCO, whose excellence as an ensemble is matched by its admirable commitment to community outreach projects, unveils the latest in Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's *Strathclyde Concertos* sequence. The one at the south, and the soloist is David Nicholson, the SCO's principal flautist. Davies himself conducts, and the programme is completed by Haydn's *Symphony No. 1* and *Missa*. City Hall, Candelage, Glasgow (041-227 5511), tonight, 7.30pm.

LES ARTS FLORISSANTS: The French Paris-based baroque ensemble comes to London to give a concert.

LA BETTE: Breuers performance by Alan Carrington's *La Bette* premiere, by Lyrice Harnett, King Street, W8 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 14th June Final week.

THE COTTON CLUB: An impression of the Harrold, Harrold: high on energy, low on story freshness. *The Cotton Club*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

THE CRACKWALKER: Urban savagery in Ontario, violence, abuse, civil strong stuff, award winning. *The Crackwalker*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

DANCING AT LUGHANASA: Brian Friel's clever award-winning memory play, set in Thelma Donnelly's kitchen, Charing Cross Road, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN: Juliet Stevenson, Michael Byrne, Bill Paterson superb in *Death and the Maiden*, a political drama. Best play of 1991. *Death and the Maiden*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

GOOD ROCKIN' TONITE: Celebrating musical celebrating film and stage pop classics. Great stuff. *Good Rockin' Tonite*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

A HARD HEART: Architect Anna Massey destroys what she claims to be in *A Hard Heart*, a comedy, and play. *A Hard Heart*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

MAKING IT BETTER: James Caudrey's subtle play concerned with class, reality and illusion in Prague and London, Jane Asher in it. *Making It Better*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

NEW RELEASES

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AT THE WHISTLE STOP CAFE (12): Heart-warming lives of two little boys from South London, with engagingly with Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary Stuart Masterson, director, Jon Avnet. *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

HEAR MY SONG (15): Promoter seeks to revive hit song by Lou Reed. *Hear My Song*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

DEATH IN BRUNSWICK (15): Lughanasa's play is the English film from the director's *Death in Brunswick*, with Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary Stuart Masterson, director, Jon Avnet. *Death in Brunswick*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE (15): Krzysztof Kieslowski's brilliant French film about two girls (Veronique, one French) who seem to share a life. With Irene Jacob, Philippe Noiret, Catherine Mallet. *The Double Life of Veronique*, W2 (01-434 2111), Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm. 15th June.

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WEEKEND EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by
Kari Knight

under the direction of William Christie, of music by such luminaries as Monteverdi, Charpentier, Lully and Mouton. All proceeds go to Crucial. St John's, Smith Square, London SW1 (01-222 1051), tonight, 7.30pm.

DAVID HOCKNEY: SEVEN PAINTINGS: No more than three years have passed since the Tate Gallery's last big David Hockney exhibition. But in a recent, at least, this new show offers something different. It includes *The Three Love Paintings*, painted by the artist in 1980, and recently bought by the Tate. The painting is notable for its profuse blue inscriptions, including lines from Walt Whitman. Other Hockney works by the gallery will be on display including *A Bigger Splash*. Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (01-471 7180), Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, Sun, 2.50pm, opens tomorrow.

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To go to a Calder exhibition is to enter, why-ally, into his own happy world of bright primary colours and bustling activity. For the most part, his work is a circus, often literally. In earlier years he made many drawings and was a sculptor on canvas that drew his late "sculptures" are full of movement. Calder has the Academy been so much fun. Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London W1 (01-439 7438), Daily, 10am-6pm, opens today.

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Reclaimed
from filmAnna Karenina
Tricycle, Kilburn

ADOLESCENT exposure to the Garbo film put me off this Tolstoy story for years, a deprivation that would not have occurred had Nancy Meckler's Shared Experience company been around to redress the balance, showing the story to be sturdy as well as romantic, intelligent instead of insufferable.

Meckler's direction of Helen Edmundson's clever adaptation elapsing the tension from its opening moment in which cloaked figures huddle against a bare, black wall and a woman is being dragged against her will through a doorway. What is happening? Who are these people? No immediate answer is provided, but the movements and lighting are so assured, the sense of doom ahead so intriguingly signalled, that we are instantly caught up within a literary work remoulded to make its points as deftly in the twist of a head or the tipping of a chair as in the steady relay of dialogue

GALLERIES: BERLIN

Crushed by the jackboot

Richard Cork on a show that recalls the Nazis' infamous 1937 exhibition of 'degenerate art'

Hanging between the mighty columns of the Altes Museum in Berlin, silkscreened banners carry photographs of George Grosz, Paul Klee, Käthe Kollwitz and other outstanding painters and sculptors. Whenever a breeze stirs them, their billowing heads look vulnerable compared with the solidity of the portico. And well they might. For these artists were ruthlessly victimised by Hitler, who confiscated 650 examples of their work from German museums and herded them into an exhibition which he called *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art).

The most vituperative and pernicious attack ever to be launched against Modernism, the show was originally crammed into hastily partitioned, corridor-like galleries at Munich's Archaeological Institute. It opened on July 19, 1937, only a day after the Nazi leader had unveiled a far grander survey called the Great German Art Exhibition in the same city. The juxtaposition was intended to laud Hitler's favourite image-makers at the expense of the avant-garde. And judging by the Altes Museum's reconstruction, he was right.

After the Degenerate Art survey had toured 13 German and Austrian cities, its contents were sold, lost or consigned to flames. No proper list of exhibits was ever published, and so historians had only a fragmentary notion of the paintings, sculpture and prints included in the show.

But the recent discovery of 70 installation photographs, preserved in the archives of the National Gallery in the former East Berlin, provide a far clearer picture of the exhibition. They enabled Stephanie Barron of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in collaboration with several German colleagues, to identify and bring together around 175 of the images arranged in the narrow, crowded chambers of *Entartete Kunst*.

Sensitively designed by the architect Frank O. Gehry, the survey opens with a 22-foot scale model of the original show. As we move along the eye-level sequence of rooms, festooned with miniature reproductions of the work they

displayed, their vileness becomes clear. No dignity was accorded to these humiliating clusters of images. They were treated like repellent evidence in a trumped-up show-trial, and comments scrawled on the walls as roughly as graffiti added to the degradation.

"An insult to German womanhood" screamed one slogan, while others branded the work as a defilement of "the German heroes of the World War." Hitler and his cronies could not forgive the artists for daring to challenge the Fascist emphasis on health, strength and militarism triumphant. In their eyes, Aryan purity had been besmirched by corrupting foreign influences, all determined to present "nature as seen by sick minds". The distorted forms favoured by Expressionism and other innovative movements testified to depravity alone, and red stencils near many of the exhibits reminded visitors that they had been "paid for by the taxes of the German working people".

Before arriving at the "degenerate art" itself, the exhibition provides grotesque and risible footage of the imagery Hitler favoured. At the opening ceremonies held in Munich to celebrate his Great German Art Exhibition, a succession of Viking boats, bronze eagles, rearing Pegasus sculptures and white-robed maidens carrying a model of the new House of German Art paraded past a gratified Führer. Then, as he entered the approved show, the first painting to greet him was a monumental portrait of himself, straining for the gravitas he could never command in person. The entire charade seems so ludicrous that it threatens to rob Nazi cultural manipulation of its true malevolence. In subsequent rooms, however, the full force of Fascist censorship is exposed. "Degenerate" literature is dis-

played in showcases, where Marx, Mann and Hemingway share the opprobrium. A video monitor relays tapes of the 1933 book burnings, when "un-German" literature was thrown on bonfires with a venom that presaged the wholesale destruction of human life in the concentration camps.

Avant-garde composers suffered a similar fate. Hitler was merciless with Schoenberg's atonality, Weill's score for the *Threepenny Opera* and black American jazz. After 1938, an exhibition of this malignant music travelled around Germany with the *Entartete Kunst* show. Headphones at the Altes Museum enable us to listen to some of the exhilarating compositions denounced as "musical Bolshevism".

The rest of this superbly researched survey is devoted to a room-by-room reconstruction of *Entartete Kunst* itself. The organisers' desire for historical fidelity has not, however, led them to ape the abusive display techniques of the original show. In each section, photographs of the Munich installation are accompanied by concise explanatory texts. But the other walls are given over to a spacious and respectful hanging of the paintings and sculpture which survive.

Some of the most powerful works that perished, and melancholy footage by the freelance American film-maker Julien Bryan in 1937 provides tantalising glimpses of lost masterpieces by Beckmann, Dix and Gies. Even so, the Nazis' realisation that "degenerate" art could be auctioned for handsome prices ensured that significant images escaped. Beckmann's *The Descent from the Cross*, reviled by the Fascists for its anguished distortions, dominates one room with a sense of harrowing compassion. But Chagall's early painting of a rabbi savouring a pinch of snuff is almost as memorable.

Although a Russian-born, and based in Paris during the 1930s, Chagall was deemed to have exerted a decadent influence on German painting. The subject-matter of the rabbi picture also condemned it in the Nazis' view: they were hell-bent on eradicating all traces of Jewish culture. Because of their anti-Semitic vendetta, I was surprised



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Farmers' Meal*, 1920: the Nazis branded it degenerate art and gave it the title *German Farmers: A Yiddish View*

that only six of the 112 artists included in *Entartete Kunst* were Jews. The Fascists, however, insisted on condemning anyone whose work seemed to smack of deviation from the heroic norm.

Nolde, a political conservative who had joined the new Nazi party in 1920, subscribed to theories of racial superiority. But these opinions did not prevent the Fascists from confiscating over 1,000 of his works from German museums, and ultimately banning him from painting. They could not forgive Nolde his brazen preoccupation with nudity and the so-called primitivism of the art he encountered in the South Pacific.

Nothing could stop Hitler and his cronies from discovering suspicious motives in the most harmless works. Kirchner's large canvas of a *Farmers' Meal* is an innocuous work, for all its bold brushstrokes and strangely aquatic marine flesh colours. In *Entartete Kunst*, however, the painting was saddled with the title *German Farmers: A Yiddish View*. Sometimes, the speed with

which Goebbels and his selection committee organised the show resulted in blunders they were forced to rectify. A hallucinatory brass *Head* by Rudolf Belling was displayed in the show, and duly reappraised here. But the committee soon realised, to its embarrassment and confusion, that Belling had been included in the survey of Hitler-approved art as well. The *Head* was quickly removed.

In the end, though, such farcical manoeuvres should not be allowed to distract attention from the poisonous nature of the event. Artists were treated like criminals in this flagrant attack on their liberty, and until Hitler's death they continued to be hounded without mercy. The only small comfort is the realisation that nearly three million people viewed *Entartete Kunst*, whereas only 20,000 saw the official Great German Art Exhibition. By pursuing the avant-garde witch-hunt with such corrosive zeal, Goebbels may have unwittingly enabled many visitors to be seduced by the illicit delights of an art they were supposed to hate.

Entartete Kunst is at the Altes Museum am Lustgarten, Berlin, until May 31.

OTHER EXHIBITIONS IN BERLIN

● Elsewhere in the spacious Altes Museum, a complementary survey of Expressionist Watercolours and Drawings shows the persecuted avant-garde at its most spontaneous. *Altes Museum am Lustgarten* until May 3.

● With great generosity, Otto van de Loo has presented his important collection of post-war art to the Neue Nationalgalerie. The main emphasis is on wildly handled, thickly applied paintings by Asger

Jorn, Karel Appel, and Pierre Alechinsky. *Neue Nationalgalerie, Potsdamer Strasse 50*, until May 3.

● Fresh and troubling insights into the origins of the first world war are provided by an admirably researched exhibition at the Deutsches Historisches Museum about the last Kaiser, Wilhelm II. *Deutsches Historisches Museum, Zeughaus, Unter den Linden 2*, until April 7.

● The post-modernist fondness for rampant classical quotation was

anticipated, between the wars, by an international array of streamlined Art Deco architects. Aptly staged in the Pergamon-museum, which houses classical masterpieces of its own, this absorbing survey juxtaposes buildings like Henry Hohenhausen's Warsaw Ballroom in Miami Beach with the Poseidon Temple at Paestum, demonstrating a debt spanning the gulf between Italy circa 450 BC and Florida in 1940. *Pergamonmuseum, Museumsinsel, Kupfergraben*, until March 31.

TELEVISION REVIEW

The truth about Wax

RUBY WAX came to Britain from America 15 years ago, broke into television and immediately became thoroughly detested. Even I, not given to detestation either through or otherwise, quickly realised that here was someone I could do without. The brash, know-all... etc. The truth has since dawned.

Ruby Wax is a sweet and quiet thing, shy even, a resident of somewhere like Surbiton where she cooks whole food and dotes on children, dogs, husband, in-laws. From time to time she pumps herself up and gets into a BBC limo, wherein — en

route to the studio — she puts on a mask of personality mostly borrowed and wholly exaggerated, the better to reinforce our prejudices about Americans, the better to make us laugh.

This metamorphosis is, for all I know, pure invention on my part. But if it explains the inexplicable fact that I have come to like Wax, that I now regard her as one of the few genuine originals in television, then it is as good an excuse as any. Surely she will not mind.

Wax returned to BBC 1 last night for a new series of *The Full Wax*. The formula is as before, a mixture of bizarre sketches on a studio set that looks as if it has been assembled from an up-market jumble sale, a foil role for the wonderfully deadpan Jennifer Saunders (now running the programme's creche), a "star" interview mercifully unlike others of the genre and

various excursions into the world outside.

Last night the last device involved breaking into Joanna Lumley's bedroom by smashing a window and discovering in bed with Lumley a man wearing stockings and a suspender belt. The sketch ended with Lumley, her nightdress caught in Wax's car door, being dragged along the street. Somehow Wax carries this off, partly because she writes scripts that leave the viewer little time to consider whether she is up to her eyes in intrinsic merit. Last night was a considerable relief, the end of having to worry about why I disliked Ruby Wax so much and the beginning of just sitting there and letting it carry me along. The possibility that Wax is exactly what she appears to be is too awful to contemplate; so I shall not.

PETER BARNARD

INTERVIEW

Baroque till you drop

Anthony Rolfe Johnson, changing back into civvies at English National Opera's rehearsal studios in West Hampstead, looks a tired man. "Yes, it is knackered," admits David Freeman, whose revival of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* has been the cause of the exhaustion.

"We spent the entire day on just the Messenger scene. Rigorous, exploratory rehearsal is part of Freeman's formula, even for a revival with people who have previously sung in the production. "People think with a revival that everybody will know what to do," says the director. "But it's a very difficult journey, one that they're not used to making. The problem is not whether the singers can understand with their heads but whether they can experience."

"To have 22 people on stage all the time, all acting strongly, is very unusual. You don't get that in plays, and you don't usually get it in opera. There are six main characters in *Rigoletto* and the chorus comes in and out, but that isn't working with the sort of micro-detail I try to get. Frankly this production is one of the toughest I've done."

This year, starting with *Orfeo* tonight, London will see productions by Freeman of all three surviving Monteverdi operas: *The Return of Ulysses* opens at ENO on May 20 and *The Coronation of Poppaea* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on May 1. Coincidence or intent? "I don't like the idea of doing cycles *à la* Ponnelle. But I've always been interested in the Monteverdi operas."

"I can remember when I first did *Orfeo*. It was in Nottingham, and I had a conversation with John Eliot Gardiner. Lord Harewood and Tony [Rolfe Johnson] about doing *Orfeo*. It was eight years before it happened. But I'd already directed *Poppaea* when I was 19, in my more megalomaniac days in Sydney. People said of *Orfeo* that it wouldn't work



Producer David Freeman (above) scores a hat trick with three Monteverdi operas in three months. Stephen Pettitt spoke to him

on the Coliseum stage, but it worked better there than on a smaller stage because actually it's very epic. So is *Ulysses*. On the other hand *Poppaea*'s really pillow talk, all very intimate."

Partly for that reason, Freeman's production of *Poppaea*, the only new one of the three, is to be staged by his own company, Opera Factory. What can we expect from Freeman's *Poppaea*? "We always think that Greece is the beginning of Western civilisation, so that there used to be a line directly from ancient Greece to British public schools. But Greece faces as much east as west, and that's the other line I try to bring into these works."

But *Poppaea* is a Roman story. "Nero was a Greco-philic too. He spent a year in Greece entering acting competitions, which rather unsurprisingly he always

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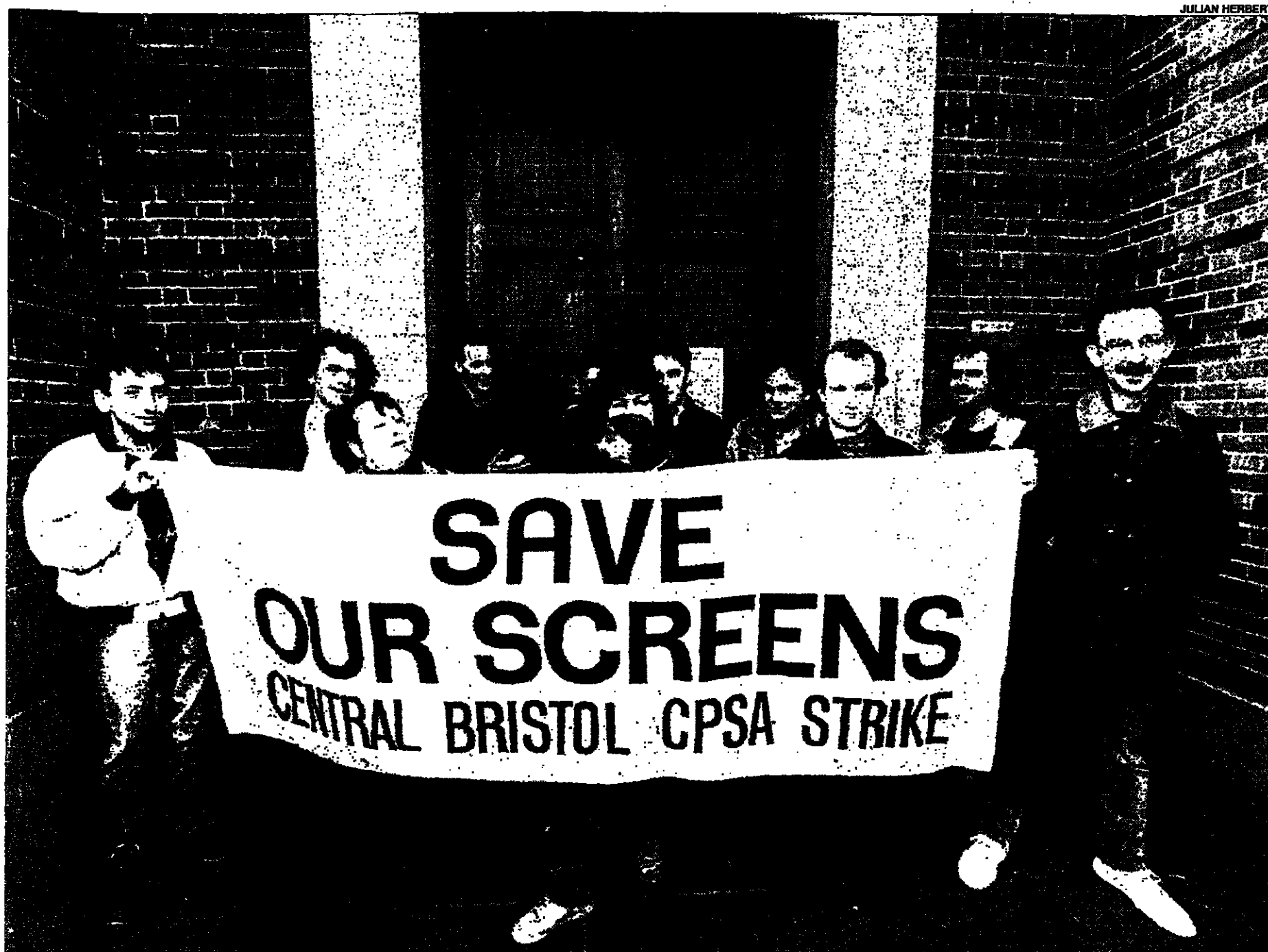
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Orfeo opens tonight at the Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-836 3161) at 7.30pm.



SOS at the job centre: striking staff in Bristol complain that they have been refused a safety measure even though they are threatened, punched and abused by "clients"

Siege of the job centres

The main job centre in Bristol is a handsome, red brick building with an interior that resembles the better class of travel agency. The carpets deaden all noise, the walls are fastidiously painted in calming colours and terminals blink on desks, as if ready to summon up the holiday of a lifetime.

Their real task is much harder: to summon up jobs in a market where the applications far outnumber the vacancies. The terminals are operated by people with varying degrees of experience, but whether they are on £6,000 a year as administrative assistants or £13,000 as executive officers, all are on what both management and unions call "the front line".

As with most front lines, this one is marked by long periods of dull routine interspersed with frantic and sometimes violent activity. People may now wait their turn on state-of-the-art plastic chairs, may now be called "clients", but a few of them are none the less prone to lashing out, often in sheer frustration. At the person, more often than not a woman, who, for the client, represents "government policy".

At Nelson Street, there have been cases where people climbed over desks to punch staff, picked up desks and threw them across the room, punched holes in screens, threw ashtrays and steel files. The Civil and Public Servants' Association (CPSA) claims that between 1989 and 1991 attempted or actual assaults in job centres nationwide rose from 155 to 233. The employment department was a fall in the number of assaults, from 161 in 1990 to 152 last year. This difference is probably accounted for by the union's inclusion of attempted assaults and verbal assaults.

This violence, and ways of preventing it, is at the heart of a dispute between the CPSA and the employment department. In 1989 the government embarked on a scheme to turn all the 1,200 job centres in Britain into open-plan offices. The union followed several years of enquiries into the best way to make job centres more "user-friendly". Various designs, which incorporated security screens between staff and clients and screened off areas for consultation, are still in use in about half of the nation's job centres. The CPSA supports the new plan in

principle but argues that 1 or 2 per cent of offices need special measures one over the scale of violence. The fact that staff are being assaulted is at least not in dispute.

What seemed like a bridgeable gap became a chasm in April last year when, with the backing of the CPSA nationally, five offices (two in Bristol and two in London at Marylebone and Forest Hill, plus one in Newcastle upon Tyne) went on indefinite strike. The Newcastle staff returned to work on Monday after a local agreement which involves hiring security guards and installing video cameras.

The CPSA in Bristol claims that its own strike could have ended late last year. John Conway, a 31-year-old administrative officer who is leading the Bristol strike, says: "We had a verbal agreement with the area manager that a high, wide counter would be installed to protect the staff, but subsequently we were told there had been a change of mind. We think the employment department put pressure on the regional management." The employment department in Bristol denies this and says the proposal was "exploratory" and, in any event, the new desks could not be built.

Whatever the merits of that argument, there is a more fundamental one over the scale of violence. The fact that staff are being assaulted is at least not in dispute.

litany of incidents from around the country, including many cases where people have needed hospital treatment and some where the DoE has subsequently awarded a disability allowance, is testament to a problem which has countless putative causes: higher unemployment through the recession, the merger of job centres and benefit offices, which means that the emotive subject of money is now discussed in the same environment where previously only jobs were assigned, and changes in the benefit entitlement rules which can dash the expectations of claimants.

"You get a case where someone comes in who was last unemployed five years ago," Mr Conway says. "Then, a person was entitled to benefit after six weeks, now it is 26 weeks. They arrive expecting to get some money only to find they have to wait the best part of six months. We understand their frustration. But

the trouble is caused by a tiny minority and we fully accept that most offices open plan can work and can make the place more user friendly.

"Our argument is purely on health and safety grounds: we think that where there is a risk, we need protection. And the two Bristol offices where we are on strike have a history of violence."

The main police station in Bristol, the Bridewell, is opposite the Nelson Street job centre. The police station is itself being refurbished to make it more user friendly, but the toughened glass screens are being retained. Avon and Somerset Police had no official comment on the dispute, but one officer at the Bridewell said that until recently there had been "a stream of calls" from the job centre to the police station, which had stopped roughly when the strike started. During the strike, the job centre is open only from 10am to 3pm each day and only for enquiries, the inference being that the violence has stopped now that the office is no longer paying out benefit.

Jane Henderson, the regional director of the Employment Service

(the part of the employment department which runs job centres) for the south west, says the problem is in danger of getting out of proportion. "This is a region with 200,000 unemployed and 30,000 job centre staff yet there is less than one assault a month on average."

"Before we refurbished Nelson Street we called in two psychologists to tell us how to create a friendly atmosphere. We conceded the need for security guards several months before the strike started and we have taken steps to ensure that the staff deal with the public in ways that avoid confrontation. But there is always some risk of people being attacked."

The CPSA argues that people are familiar with protective screens in banks and building societies, so why not accept them in job centres? One psychologist, who asked not to be named because he is involved in government staff training, said: "The trouble with that argument is that in a bank people are dealing with what is basically their own money. Claimants, whatever they may have paid in over the years, are essentially asking for 'government money', not their own. This makes the definition of entitlement different depending on which side of the desk you are on and that is why you get violence."

Trusting the client can be painful. Other inner-city offices report similar activity to those in Bristol, including a case in Sussex last year where a member of staff was allegedly jumped upon and attacked in the foyer of a job centre when he went to lock up for lunch. There was no prosecution because of a lack of independent witnesses.

The impression of this dispute is that it is hardly in the classic pre-Thatcher stereotype of bloody-minded management versus bloody-minded union. The 30 people on strike in Bristol, few of whom have joined a dispute before, appear to be waiting for a concession that will enable them to go back and the management appears to be looking for a concession to keep the open-plan policy intact.

Indeed, the key phase may not be the end of the strike but the acid test of the policy, which will come when all 1,200 job centres have been refurbished. Only a full year under that regime will answer the question as to whether the best way to protect staff is to trust the customers.

Do 'user friendly' employment offices increase the danger of assault by claimants? Peter Barnard talks to striking staff on the front line

Whatever the merits of that argument, there is a more fundamental one over the scale of violence. The fact that staff are being assaulted is at least not in dispute.

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Jane Henderson, the regional director of the Employment Service

ABC: they all agree

Reading is alive and well taught in primary schools throughout the land, despite this week's HMI report

A peep into the classrooms of some of the 20 children whose growing-up is being recorded annually in the *Citizen 2000* television programme will come as a salutary corrective to parents who believe all they have been told recently about the way primary schools teach — or fail to teach — English.

A report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate this week said that one in five primary schools still teaches reading poorly. According to a comparative reading survey published last month of seven-year-olds by the National Foundation for Educational Research, standards of reading have fallen by 2.5 per cent in the past four years. Often the blame for the decline has been put on "progressive" methods of primary teaching.

The children whose lives began with *Channel 4's* in 1982 were eight, turning nine, when they were filmed last year learning English for Sunday's programme. The message that shines from this sample is how similar and how traditional the teaching of English grammar still seems to be across the country.

Most of the children filmed are at state primary schools but, for comparison, one school is Roman Catholic, one Jewish, one a private preparatory school and one is 100 per cent bilingual — all its children are from Asian backgrounds. Yet the lessons are almost interchangeable: most of these children could swap classes and still feel at home with the teaching.

Lists of tricky spellings on the blackboard, spelling books, rules about punctuation and parts of speech and, above all, whole-class tests are features of the teaching. Most of the learning is by heart. The teachers come across as dedicated, no-nonsense women and the children as avid learners and Roald Dahl enthusiasts — all of which belie the current climate of belief that primary schools are hotbeds of relaxed chaos.

Annie MacDonald, the co-producer of the *Dove* Production film, is herself a former primary school teacher. "We found to our surprise that state and private school classes were both dedicated to formal, whole-class teaching with children sitting at desks and taking things down from the blackboard. Some teachers have returned to this from other methods."

Matthew, in a Liverpool primary, is being asked to define a syllable. His young teacher says: "I have found it

much easier to teach sentence structure and spelling formally from a blackboard. The only way is to learn it by heart."

Whereas Matthew was initially taught to read phonically (C-A-T), Leo who is at a progressive school in Harrow, learnt by word-recognition, putting whole words into a rack to make sentences. But now? His teacher says: "We found it necessary to introduce formal spelling tests because children weren't picking it up."

By contrast Dean, seen reading aloud in a small group in a Cheshire primary, is not given formal spelling lessons. "Spelling is pointed out to them and hopefully they take it on board," his teacher says. "That would hardly satisfy the parents at Rachel's Jewish school at Barking in Redbridge, north-east London, a borough that retains the 11-plus. 'The parents want us to teach spelling formally,' her teacher says, 'and the children are very keen to know what they have achieved, and what others have achieved.'"

The same concern for achievement applies in Northern Ireland, which has kept grammar schools and the 11-plus. Joanne takes ten spellings to learn every night at her home in Belfast.

Anwar goes to school in Brick Lane, east London, where 28 out of his class of 29 speak only Bengali at home (the 29th speaks Mandarin). His sister Mumtaz helps him with his reading homework. His teacher, who knows only a few words of Bengali, splits the class into small groups by ability, for reading. "They support each other," she says. "There's always somebody's friend you can ask to translate. Bengali children are very keen to learn. Also, they are brought up to respect their elders, so they are very well disciplined."

Georgia, whose prep school is in Dulwich, south London, is similarly keen: "I do nothing but read, read, read." Like most of the children she puts Dahl among her three favourites, with Quentin Blake and Terence Blacker.

In Paddington, where Ross is taught by a mixture of methods, his single mother has brought in a retired inspector of schools, to coach him two evenings a week. "By his age," the inspector says drily, "he has reached the limits of informality."

PETER LEWIS

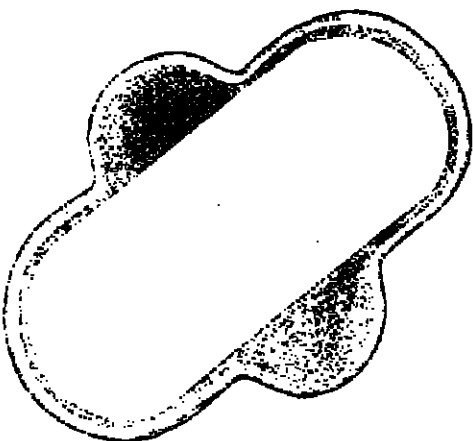
Reading, Writing and Roald Dahl is on *Channel Four* on Sunday at 4.30



Spellbound: children throughout Britain are keen to read



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The inside story

Recent progress
in genetic
science may lead
to a reduction in
disease, reports
Nigel Hawkes

The advance of genetic knowledge is in danger of telling us more about ourselves than we really want to know.

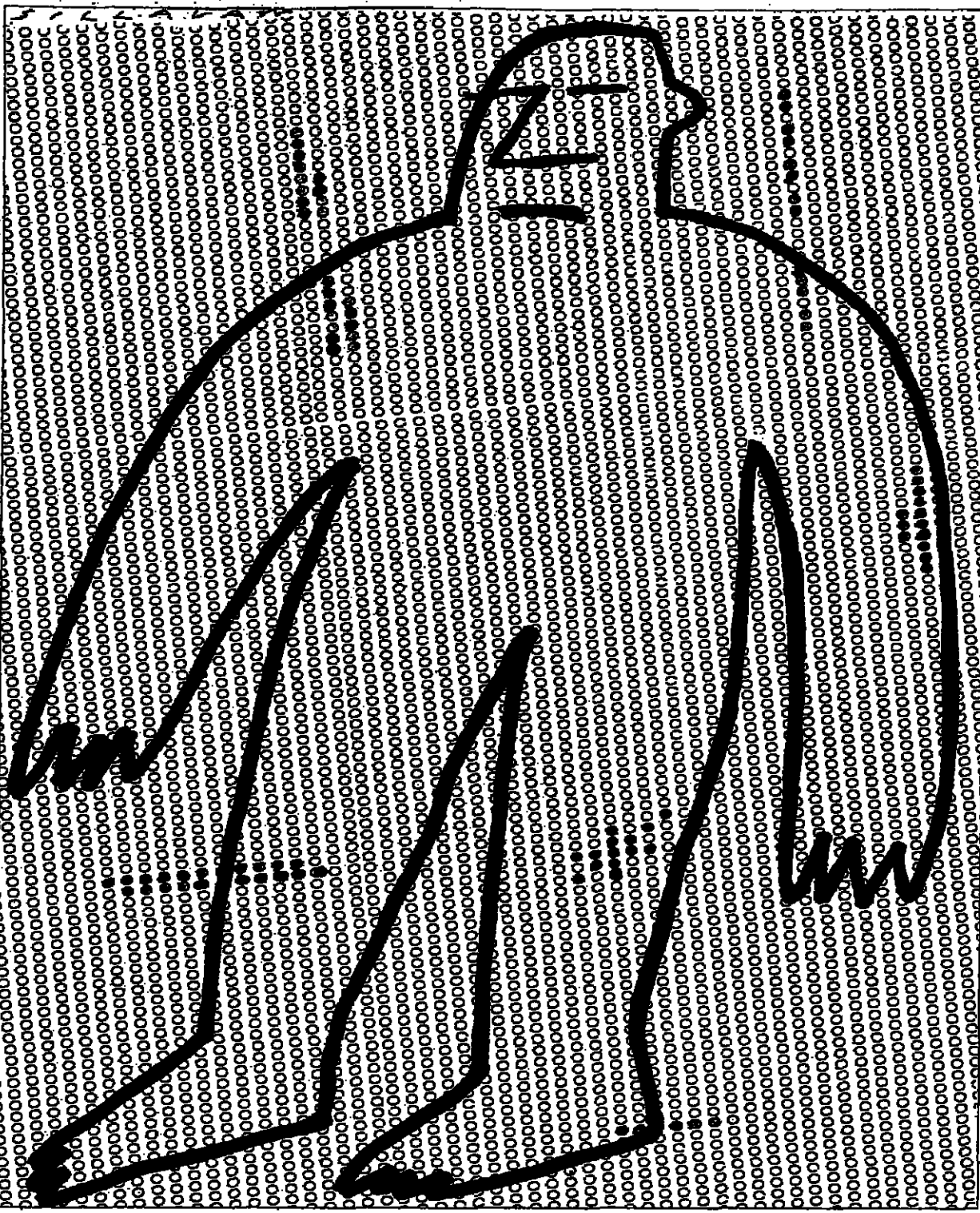
Hardly a week passes without a new discovery. Last week it was the turn of asthma, with the news from Oxford that an asthma gene may be close to identification. Before that, scientists declared that they were pursuing the "Churchill gene" — the magic ingredient which, it is surmised, enabled Winston Churchill to survive to a great age in spite of disregarding virtually every rule of healthy living.

Thousands of diseases, ranging from the relatively trivial to the life-threatening, are genetically determined. Some are caused by a single faulty gene out of the 100,000 we all carry; others, like cancer or heart disease, are obviously more complex. Some genetic defects are sufficient in themselves to cause diseases, while others only increase the susceptibility to disease. Everyone carries several gene defects which are potentially very damaging; whether they come to light or not depends on whom you marry, and on your lifestyle.

If a carrier marries another carrier, their children may suffer the full-blown condition. In more complex diseases where inheritance is only part of the picture, a healthy lifestyle may mean that the defect is never given the chance to express itself. The evidence is strong that there is a genetic component in diseases like breast or colon cancer, but it is probably the result of several genes rather than just one, and not everybody carrying those genes will develop the diseases. Environment, diet and other factors are equally or more important in these cases.

The first result of the discoveries is to make screening for disease, or susceptibility to disease, much easier. It is possible to screen for cystic fibrosis, for example, by analysing cells from the inner lining of the cheeks, collected by spitting a mouthwash into a test-tube. In the future such simple tests may tell us our chances of contracting, or avoiding, a whole range of conditions in which inheritance plays a part.

Sir David Weatherall, professor of medicine at Oxford University, envisages a future in which we shall all "live by our genes", tailoring our lifestyle to the hand our own



particular genes have dealt us. Of course, if we are unlucky enough to inherit the genes for classic genetic diseases like Huntington's chorea, which leads to dementia and death in middle age, there may be little that changing lifestyle can do to help. The situation is different for diseases that are only partly genetic in origin. Anybody carrying the genes that predispose to cancer or heart disease would be counselled to conform to the rules of healthy eating, while an individual whose genes made them sensitive to hydrocarbons would be well advised not to work in a refinery. If allowed to, insurance companies might use the results of screening to set premiums or to deny cover to poor risks.

Sir Walter Bodmer, director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and president of the Human Genome Mapping Organisation, is in no doubt that the tests will have a huge impact on medicine and on the way we lead our lives. "This is the preventive medicine of the future," he says. As an example, he cites the planned trial of a drug, tamoxifen, which many specialists believe could be effective in preventing as well as treating breast cancer.

Sir Walter says: "At present, women are selected for the trial if members of their family have suffered from breast cancer — a mother, a sister, an aunt. Obviously it would be much better if we could find specific genetic markers, which could give a stronger indication of whether a woman is at risk of developing breast cancer, and further off, in mental illnesses like Alzheimer's, depression and schizophrenia."

Professor Bob Williamson of St Mary's Hospital Medical School in London sees screening as a way of giving people their own personalised healthy living plan. He says: "At the moment, there's simply too much advice about, so people ignore it. But if we can say, look, you are at particular risk of heart disease, you had better take some notice, then people may be prepared to listen."

The way screening is carried out, and its accuracy, is likely to be critical. In the

1970s a screening system for the genetic disease sickle cell anaemia was introduced in the US, but went badly wrong. There was unfair discrimination against healthy people who could no longer get jobs or insurance.

Trials organised by the Medical Research Council and the Cystic Fibrosis Research Trust are trying to find out the best way of screening. Dr Tony Jackson, chairman

This is the preventive medicine of the future

SIR WALTER BODMER

of the trust's Research and Medical Advisory Committee, says: "If we can tell people they are definitely not carriers or that they definitely are, then that's fine. But there are some, about 15 per cent, where we have to give them a statistical probability, and that sets up anxieties. They don't know what to do."

The issue will be even more important for diseases in which the genetic cause is less clear-cut. Women who discover they are carriers of the gene for diseases like thalassaemia or cystic fibrosis

are usually delighted to be told, because it enables them to have the choice of an abortion if their children will turn out to have the condition. But a genetic test that indicated, for example, a one in five chance of a child suffering from schizophrenia might simply create anxiety.

Professor Williamson says that for diseases that are well understood, this danger is much smaller. Studies of French Canadians by Dr Anna Kestling, a colleague of his at St Mary's, have already shown clear genetic differences between those at high and low risk of heart disease. The French Canadians are a special case, because they derive from a relatively small stock, and have a narrow range of genetic variation. But Professor Williamson believes that for common diseases like cancer of the colon, effective screening of the more heterogeneous British population may not be far away.

Screening will be given a great boost if attempts to repair genetic defects (see box below) are successful. Then there will be a clear benefit to set against the fear that genetic knowledge will be used to deny jobs or health insurance. Already parents with children suffering from diseases like cystic fibrosis are anxiously calculating whether gene therapy can come quickly enough to save their children.

Gene therapy is the process of correcting genes that have gone wrong, in order to make the cells of organs function as they should. It has nothing to do with tampering with our inheritance.

Human cells come in two distinct forms. There are the somatic cells which make up the different organs of the body, each of which contains its own set of genetic instructions which tell it how to behave, which proteins to manufacture, and so on. Any changes made to these cells are not passed on to our children. That would only happen if the changes were made in the germ cells, found in the eggs, sperm, and early embryo. At present, there is no intention to carry out gene therapy on germ cells.

Sir Walter Bodmer, the president of the Human Genome Mapping Organisation, says: "Most of us believe this is something we shouldn't do because we don't know enough about it." Baroness Warnock, who chaired the committee investigating human embryology in the early 1980s, agrees, although she does not rule

out germ cell therapy for all time. If there was a chance of totally eliminating a disease such as AIDS, for example, she thinks the gain might be seen as sufficiently great to outweigh the argument against it.

For the moment, however, the target is the somatic cells. Within the next few weeks, an experimental treatment is due to begin at the University of Missouri to treat patients suffering from a disorder that leads to early death from heart attacks. The condition is caused by a faulty gene in the liver which makes a defective version of a protein called LDL receptor, responsible for controlling cholesterol levels in the body. The patients will first have 15 per cent of their livers removed, cut into small pieces and treated with an enzyme to release the liver cells. Then the cells will be exposed to a virus which has been engineered to contain a correct copy of the gene that produces the LDL receptor. The virus will carry the gene into the liver cells, which will then be re-injected back into the patient's liver through a vein. Once they get there, they are

expected to implant and grow, producing the protein that the patients lack. This experiment, recently approved by the US regulatory authorities, is fairly typical of the gene therapy treatments that might be used for a variety of conditions.

Viruses, which function by invading cells and taking over the genetic mechanisms, appear to be ideal vectors for carrying the genes into place, but a lot of questions remain to be answered. How safe will the procedure be? How can we be sure to get the re-engineered cells to the right part of the right organ, and will they continue to function once in place? If the method works, it may be useful even for diseases that are not genetic in origin. For example, gene therapy might be used to strengthen the body's own immune response, and help it to fight off cancer, or AIDS. So long as only somatic cells are treated, the method is in principle not very different from procedures such as bone marrow transplants. Within a decade we can expect to see dozens of attempts to cure genetic diseases by gene therapy.

Give a man room



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttaford

FIFTEEN years ago a journalist visiting this country observed that a man's choice of socks and underpants was every bit as revealing as his accent. Today, boxer shorts are as likely to have been bought in the high street as in Harrods, and there is no longer a class division between the wearers of loose-fitting pants, and those who favour Y-fronts or jockey pants.

Medical research shows that the choice of style in pants may be important to a man's fertility, for the testes should not be constrained, as they are by tight underwear. Nature has so fashioned the male genitalia that when cold the scrotal muscle contracts to hold the testes close to the warm crutch; when hot the muscle relaxes and allows them to hang freely. In this way a constant temperature, fractionally lower than that of the abdomen, is maintained and with it the best environment for sperm development.

A year or two ago tight underwear was blamed for the increase in the number of cases of cancer of the testes — the incidence has tripled this century. Then epidemiologists pointed out that the increase started 90 years ago, but tight underwear had been popular for only 40 years. Furthermore, in the 18th and 19th centuries, figure-hugging trousers were the rage. The blame was then shifted to the better nourishment of present-day mothers: plump women tend to have higher oestrogen levels which some feel may have a carcinogenic effect on the testes of the unborn male child.

Recently, in his research into the sperm count of modern men, Professor Niels Skakkebaek, of Copenhagen has demonstrated that the average count is only half that of 40

years ago, and that there has also been a comparable reduction in quality. Tight underpants have again been blamed, together with excess alcohol, exposure to pollutants in general and to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in particular. The majority of men have more than enough sperm — up to 180 million per ml — but if the count falls to 20 million infertility is a distinct possibility. The amount of semen is also important. Infertility only becomes likely if the quantity is less than 1ml. Usually it is between 3ml and 5ml, the contents of a small or large teaspoonful. Sperm quality is equally important. They must be active, swim in a purposeful way and there should not be more than 40 per cent of abnormal form.

Fertility can be marginally improved by keeping the testes cool. Men with a low count should wear boxer pants under trousers cut neither too tight nor too high. Very hot baths, excess alcohol and pot-smoking should be avoided and some doctors advise that the men concerned should not ejaculate more than two or three times a week.

Causes of infertility amenable to surgery need treatment. Mr Roger Kirby, a surgeon at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, said that when the sperm count was low and a varicocele — a scrotal varicose vein, which keeps the testes too hot, was present — ligature (tying off) of the vein was worthwhile. He has also had success in bypassing blocks, due to previous infections, in the tubes leading from the testes. Other research has shown that pentoxifylline will stimulate laggardly sperm, while microinjection of the ovum with selected sperm has also been used.

Killer cure

THE hazards of arsenical poisoning became all too apparent to the patients of Badhan Rakshar, who has practised as a healer for 27 years. Last week Mr Rakshar, who continued to prescribe arsenic even after the police had warned him that some of his followers had had to be admitted to hospital, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

In the 19th century arsenic, and Mr Rakshar's other sovereign remedy, mercury, were widely prescribed in Britain; but the greater danger to the public came from the Victorian industrialists rather than from their doctors. By 1880 arsenical pigments were so often used, and so often caused chronic poisoning, that the Medical Society of London issued a long list of items coloured by them. The products ranged from coloured soaps to butchers' labels, wallpaper, and even Christmas tree decorations.

Chronic arsenical poisoning, characterised by a running nose, diarrhoea, vomiting, dermatitis and nerve damage leading to muscle weakness, was common until 1902, when the colouring agents were outlawed. The danger persisted in industry and agriculture, in which arsenical sprays were used as insecticides. One survey as late as 1941 showed one apple grower in five had clinical signs of chronic arsenical poisoning.



Hospital handicap

PEOPLE would be wrong in assuming that once in hospital the disabled would be well catered for and that baths would have hand grips, that there would be strategically placed seats in long corridors for those who found the going difficult, and that signs would be clearly printed, to help those losing their sight.

Teams of hospital planners are no better than the rest of society when it comes to catering for the disabled. The Royal College of Physicians, working with the Prince of Wales's advisory group on disability, published a report last month which analyses the standard of care the disabled receive in hospital.

They found that lack of suitable provision cramped the independence of the disabled, and increased the workload of nurses. As a result of the research

the Royal College of Physicians has produced a report, with a foreword by the Prince of Wales, on the needs both physical and emotional of the disabled when in hospital. The report, or charter as it is known, gives guidance on building adaptations, their costs, and on the training of staff in the care of disabled. The report stresses the need for cooperation with the disabled when their welfare and care is under discussion.

Last week the number of cases of measles in 1988 was printed as being 200, rather than, as it should have been, 200,000. The campaign to have children inoculated with MMR has reduced the incidence of measles to less than 200 in a week, an achievement of which the medical services are justifiably proud.

CHOLESTEROL

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Heart maintenance

Enjoying a long and active life depends on keeping the heart and circulation healthy.

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3. Stop smoking and...
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Unfortunately garlic oil products use boiled garlic and contain little or no allicin. So what can you do?

Kwai Garlic

Kwai guarantees a high amount of natural allicin producing substances in every little easily swallowed tablet of concentrated garlic.

The richest source of allicin is organically grown Chinese garlic. Kwai always selects the highest grade, whole Chinese garlic cloves



Try the Kwai kiss test.

from the same fertile province. Then they are carefully dried in a special process which just takes out water and nothing else. So Kwai is the nearest thing to raw, fresh garlic in a convenient tablet form. Unlike garlic oil capsules, Kwai contains no gelatine and no vegetable oil.

Odour controlled

If Kwai is so potent, why can't you smell it or taste it? (25% of current users were recommended Kwai by their friends!)

This is because Kwai doesn't produce its allicin until the special coating dissolves in your digestive system.

Three times a day

Research has shown that it's best to spread your intake of garlic across the day. Taking it once a day, even a large amount, seems in some important ways to lose its effectiveness after a short time. And not taking Kwai's concentrated garlic all at once, helps to make sure it doesn't make you smell.

So just take two tablets with each meal and stay fragrant.

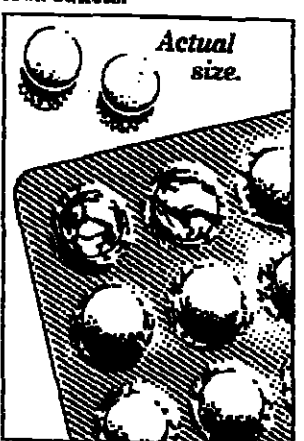
\$6 million heart research

Like you, Kwai cares about your health and has so far invested over \$6 million in research studies to confirm what has been suspected for centuries — that garlic could help keep the heart healthy. No other company has. Kwai is unique.

No.1 in Europe

Kwai is now Europe's No. 1 non-prescription health brand and over 1 million people use it every day. Kwai is the ideal way to take garlic which could help maintain a healthy heart and circulation. That's why nine out of ten people who try Kwai, stay with Kwai.

Kwai is available throughout Great Britain from Boots, chemists, Superdrug, Holland and Barrett and other health food outlets.



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THE TIMES

PERSONAL COLUMN

ESTABLISHED 1785

MOTHERS DAY
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FIELDHOUSE - Lady Fieldhouse (Midge), Mark, Amanda and Sarah thank their many friends for their loving letters of sympathy on the death of John. They will endeavour to answer them all personally in due course.

HALES-TUCKER - Rosemary and the boys want to express their most sincere thanks to all relatives, friends and neighbours for the kindness, messages and expressions of sympathy, also the beautiful floral tributes received during their recent and sudden loss. A special thanks to those many friends of John for the great comfort they gave by their presence during the Requiem Mass at the Church of Our Lady and English and Marys and at the crematorium service at Crematorium.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL ACCOUNTS WELCOME - Cash, cheques, credit cards, etc. All accounts welcome. 25-26 Victoria Road, Weymouth, Dorset. Tel: 01305 331111.

FAIRY GODPARENTS - If you are a fairy godparent, please contact us for a free service. Tel: 01305 331111.

J.E. STEPHENS - Funeral Director. 25-26 Victoria Road, Weymouth, Dorset. Tel: 01305 331111.

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ALL TICKETS - Phantom of the Opera. Tel: 071 481 4481.

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John Grooms - John Grooms Association for Disabled People. Tel: 071 481 4481.

DIARY OF TIMES CLASSIFIED

Our Personal Column focuses on a different theme for your private advertising every day.

MONDAY - TUITION & COURSES
TUESDAY - HOBBIES & PASTIMES
WEDNESDAY - HOUSEHOLD CONTENTS
THURSDAY - FAMILY MATTERS
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ELEGANT COTTAGE with Charles House, Stabling, Man's Room, Farmhouse, Garden, and Paddock. Tel: 071 481 4481.

An advertisement taken from The Times Personal Column Thursday June 22nd, 1815. If you would like to advertise or make your own announcement, contact our classified advertising sales department. TELEPHONE 071 481 4000

FOR SALE

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EXPERIENCED Chauffeur seeks position. Tel: 071 481 4481.

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IT'S ALL AT TRAILBLAZERS
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Under the provisions of Section 3 of the Charities Act 1985 the Trustees of certain Charities transferred their funds to another Charity.

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MOTHERS DAY

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ACROSS
1 Sixty ferryman (6)
5 Crash (5)
9 Metals mineral (3)
10 Splitable rock (6)
11 Dismiss (4)
12 Get fix on (8)
14 Concocted (6)
15 Downy white fibre (5)
16 Fall to come off (4-4)
18 Crafty (4)
19 Shirked (6)
21 Intract (6)
22 Hawaiian garden (3)
23 1,000 kg (5)
24 Sleeping sickness (6)
DOWN
2 Vented riding coat (7-6)
3 Kick up a fuss (5-4)
4 Jotter (7)
5 Hickory nut (5)
6 Drive (3)
7 Prone to immolation (5-2,6)

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent
This position is a variation from the game Alekhine - Laverfish, St Petersburg 1912. Here black, having seen what was coming, had already resigned. What had persuaded him that resistance was futile? White to play.

Solution: 1 Nf6+ Kg2 2 Qd2+ Kh1 3 Qh2+ Kg1 4 Qf2+ Kh1 5 Qg3+ Kh2 6 Qf2+ Kh1 7 Qg3+ Kh2 8 Qf2+ Kh1 9 Qg3+ Kh2 10 Qf2+ Kh1 11 Qg3+ Kh2 12 Qf2+ Kh1 13 Qg3+ Kh2 14 Qf2+ Kh1 15 Qg3+ Kh2 16 Qf2+ Kh1 17 Qg3+ Kh2 18 Qf2+ Kh1 19 Qg3+ Kh2 20 Qf2+ Kh1 21 Qg3+ Kh2 22 Qf2+ Kh1 23 Qg3+ Kh2 24 Qf2+ Kh1 25 Qg3+ Kh2 26 Qf2+ Kh1 27 Qg3+ Kh2 28 Qf2+ Kh1 29 Qg3+ Kh2 30 Qf2+ Kh1 31 Qg3+ Kh2 32 Qf2+ Kh1 33 Qg3+ Kh2 34 Qf2+ Kh1 35 Qg3+ Kh2 36 Qf2+ Kh1 37 Qg3+ Kh2 38 Qf2+ Kh1 39 Qg3+ Kh2 40 Qf2+ Kh1 41 Qg3+ Kh2 42 Qf2+ Kh1 43 Qg3+ Kh2 44 Qf2+ Kh1 45 Qg3+ Kh2 46 Qf2+ Kh1 47 Qg3+ Kh2 48 Qf2+ Kh1 49 Qg3+ Kh2 50 Qf2+ Kh1 51 Qg3+ Kh2 52 Qf2+ Kh1 53 Qg3+ Kh2 54 Qf2+ Kh1 55 Qg3+ Kh2 56 Qf2+ Kh1 57 Qg3+ Kh2 58 Qf2+ Kh1 59 Qg3+ Kh2 60 Qf2+ Kh1 61 Qg3+ Kh2 62 Qf2+ Kh1 63 Qg3+ Kh2 64 Qf2+ Kh1 65 Qg3+ Kh2 66 Qf2+ Kh1 67 Qg3+ Kh2 68 Qf2+ Kh1 69 Qg3+ Kh2 70 Qf2+ Kh1 71 Qg3+ Kh2 72 Qf2+ Kh1 73 Qg3+ Kh2 74 Qf2+ Kh1 75 Qg3+ Kh2 76 Qf2+ Kh1 77 Qg3+ Kh2 78 Qf2+ Kh1 79 Qg3+ Kh2 80 Qf2+ Kh1 81 Qg3+ Kh2 82 Qf2+ Kh1 83 Qg3+ Kh2 84 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BBC 1

- 6.00 Ceebees** (712636)
6.15 Faces of Islam British Muslims talk about the holy month of Ramadan (712636) **6.30 Breakfast News** (57843874)
9.05 Kilroy Topical debate with Robert Kilroy-Silk (5971435)
9.50 Hot Chets Paul and Jeanne Rankin prepare white chocolate and hazelnut cheesecake (5944771)
10.00 News regional news and weather (8868481) **10.05 Playdays** (s) (5434126) **10.25 Puddingtime** Peter Cawton (s) (8878858) **10.35 No Kidding** Final of the family quiz (s) (5944455)
11.00 News regional news and weather (4178435) **11.05 People Today** Special Live coverage of the opening service at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone in Milton Keynes, Britain's first interdenominational church, in the presence of the Queen, including at 12.00 News, regional news and weather (4968832), **12.20 Puddle Mill** (s) (2525503) **12.55 Regional news and weather** (50152787) **1.00 One O'Clock News** and weather (51139)
1.30 Neighbours (Ceebees) (s) (50076307)
1.35 Film: Nobody Runs Forever (1989). Daff and clichéd thriller starring Rod Taylor as an Australian detective sent to London to arrest high commissioner Christopher Plummer for murdering his wife. Directed by Ralph Thomas (26639416)
3.30 Cartoon Double Bill (4404955)
3.35 Children's BBC: Biff's Recycling household junk (s) (5353133) **4.05 Against the Storm** Halki Bagnier reads the text in a five-part story by Guye Haydini for Jock Macdonald (s) (5077145) **4.20 The Further Adventures of SuperTed** Cartoon (s) (4717655) **4.30 Hanger 17** Music and comedy (s) (5424941) **4.55 Newsround** Extra: Tim's Story. Drama-documentary about Chidline, the telephone helpline for children (5174787) **5.10 Grange Hill** Last in the series of the school drama (Ceebees) (s) (2693481)
5.35 Neighbours (Ceebees) (s) (547650). Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster **5.40 Six O'Clock News** with Peter Sissons and Maura Stuart. (Ceebees) (435)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (787). Northern Ireland: Neighbours (s) (Ceebees)
7.00 Wogan Among Tony's guests is the pop singer Yaz (549435) **7.35 Harry and the Hendersons**. (Ceebees) (s) (241874)
8.00 In Sickness and in Health Movie ratings from Warren Mitchell as the bipolar senior citizen (594485)
8.30 Caught in the Act Shane Richie introduces candid home videos. (Ceebees) (s) (5955)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Martyn Lewis. (Ceebees) Regional news and weather (34177)
9.50 Film: Educating Rita (1983) **CHOICE** Woy. Rita's story of an unlettered Liverpool hard-core and her drunken Open University tutor is offered as part of the BBC contribution to Adult Learners' Week. *Educating Rita* began as a play and remains essentially a two-hander, despite the obligatory "opening out" on the way from stage to screen. As such it lacks heavily on Russell's sharp-edged dialogue and the excellent central performances. Michael Caine plays the seedy, middle-aged professor and Julie Walters, in her first film role, is the working-class girl trying to swap Harold Robbins for Chelov. There is a Pygmalion-like flavour to their exchanges, except that the Caine character is hardly the suave Professor Higgins. The film was an unexpected hit for its veteran director, Lewis Gilbert, who went on to film Russell's *Shirley Valentine*. (Ceebees) (754459) Northern Ireland: Sessions from the Seventies (191139); 10.20 Sportsweek (725888); 10.45 Second Chance (750508); 11.00 Film: *Educating Rita* (25577)
11.40 Second Chance (25577) **CHOICE** A resident craftsman learn how to run their own gaspilling co-operative. (Ceebees) (502597)
11.55 Film: Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives (1986). Tasteless addition to the summer camp horror cycle. Psychotic killer Jason Voorhees rises from the dead to commit further murder and mayhem. Starring Thom Mathews and C.J. Graham. Directed by Tom McLoughlin (s) (362400) **1.20 Weather**



Top of the class: Michael Caine and Julie Walters (9.50pm)

BBC 2

- 8.45 Open University: Poetry: Language and History** (3469077). Ends at 7.35
8.00 News (5623058) **8.15 Westminster** (5615226)
9.00 Daytime on TV: France (5615226) **9.15 Teaching Today** (565787) **9.45 Watch** (s) (4805042) **10.00 Look and Read** (s) (5633077) **10.20 Around Scotland** (s) (5048684) **10.40 Into Music** (s) (5636819) **11.00 Dier** (s) (5014888) **11.15 English Express** (s) (5065503) **11.30 Northern Ireland: Ulster in Focus** (s) (7133503) **12.00 English Film** (54520) **12.30 Scene 25** (5236) **1.00 The Brutal Experience** (s) (5945559) **1.20 Green Channel** (s) (1080384) **1.35 Piny's House** (s) (5849706) **1.40 English Time** (s) (5822248)
2.00 News and weather (7422690); **Words and Pictures** (s) (5672243)
2.15 Weekend Outlook: Open University (74188313)
2.20 Sport on Friday, with Helen Rolison. Golf: The Ryder Cup Classic; Football: FA Cup quarter-finals review; Racing: Review of the Cheltenham National Hunt Festival (2521139). Including at 3.00 and 3.50 News and weather (4471587)
4.00 Catchword Paul Coo hosts the word game (s) (400)
4.30 Seabrook's Year Summer. Shepherd Richard Seabrook takes his lambs to the July sales (s) (684)
5.00 A Question of Sport (s). (Ceebees) (s) (1708)
5.30 Top Gear. The latest French sports cars (s) (536)
5.00 Thunderbirds. Puppet adventure series (s). (Ceebees) (749077)
5.50 Dr Who: The Sea Devils. Jon Pertwee stars as the Doctor in the second of a six-part adventure (s). (Ceebees) (20553)
7.15 100 Per Cent. The magazine for teenagers talking to juvenile offenders, and looks at unusual modes of transport (s) (56053)
8.00 Public Eye: The Disappearing Motor Show **CHOICE**. It may seem odd that a report on British car crime should open on the Costa del Sol but do not adjust your sets. Not only are cars stolen at an alarming rate in this country but many thousands of them end up overseas. Martin Bashir's report on the alternative car industry tries to get behind the statistics and show how the scams are done. The simple one is ringing, or changing a car's identity by switching the identification numbers. The more ambitious variant is to weld the front of one car on to the back of another. Either way the innocent buyer loses. Stolen cars can be confiscated with no compensation. What can be done to stop it? Phoebe Little, it seems, is using more police forces are prepared to set up stolen vehicle squads manned by experts who can tell a ringer from the real thing (5950)
8.30 Gardeners' World. A guide to hardy annuals, the nocturnal habits of aromatic plants, and the latest gardening books (5597)
9.00 Victoria Wood: The 1985 TV. The 1985 showcase for the talented comedienne. With Julie Walters and Celia Imrie (s) (3418)
Self-portrait: controversial German artist Otto Dix (9.30pm)
9.30 Artists: Otto Dix - A Tale of Two Germanies. A profile of the controversial German painter, whose paintings were burned by the Nazis as being degenerate and who faced the courts on charges of obscenity. As Germany redefines its geographic and cultural boundaries, Dix examines the artist as a unifying figure (73972)
10.30 Newsnight (5623058)
11.25 What the Papers Say with Jane Thynne of the Daily Telegraph. (168853). Wales: Wales in Westminster; 11.45 What the Papers Say 11.40 Scrutiny (335705) **12.00 News** (716004)
12.15 Film: La Manchera (1989). Flamboyant costume drama starring Michael Madsen and Helena Bonham-Carter. An Italian mobster dons a vespa of disguises to court an actress. Directed by Florio Infascio. In Italy with English subtitles (707849) Ends at 1.40
2.00pm Stop the World - I Want to Get Off (1989). Musical play. The Young Doctors (5623058) **3.00 The Witches of Eastwick** (1987). A boy believes his daughter is a witch and becomes a detective (1971)
4.00 Wings of the Eagle (1980). Starring Nicolas Cage (5819139)
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